The Past, Present, and Future of U.S. Ground Interventions

Identifying Trends, Characteristics, and Signposts

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Preface

This report documents the results of the project "Past and Future Trends in U.S. Army Interventions." The project analyzed historic trends in U.S. ground interventions, identified factors that influence the likelihood and size of these interventions, and identified potential signposts of future interventions that can be used by Army planners to better anticipate and plan for future interventions.

The findings should be of value to a wide-ranging audience in the defense and foreign policy community, including those with an interest in gaining a greater understanding of past trends and patterns in U.S. ground interventions as well as those seeking to gain insight into the possible drivers, characteristics, and locations of potential future interventions. The signposts presented in this report will be particularly useful for Army planners and strategists who may be able to use the metrics and analysis provided here to improve planning and responsiveness for future ground interventions.

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Summary

Over the past 100 years, the U.S. Army has engaged in dozens of major ground deployments, serving in highly varied environments and completing missions that range from peacekeeping to conventional war to humanitarian relief. Even as the overall incidence of inter- and intrastate conflict has declined in recent years, the frequency of U.S. military interventions in overseas areas has risen, reaching a peak in the mid-2000s and remaining at high levels through to the present. These interventions have involved millions of U.S. troops, cost billions of dollars, and placed significant demands on Army resources.

These challenges are unlikely to abate in the near term. To that end, the Army would benefit from an enhanced ability to anticipate the types and conditions of overseas military interventions it is most likely to be called upon to undertake in the future. Anticipating where and when future interventions might occur requires a clear understanding of historical trends in U.S. ground interventions, an identification of the key factors that drive the likelihood and size of U.S. interventions, and a way to translate these factors into actionable metrics that can be used by Army planners to track and monitor where and when future interventions are most likely and what the demands of these future interventions might be. Existing research on U.S. military interventions identifies a range of different factors that seem to influence U.S. intervention decisions, but fails to operationalize these factors and thus has limited utility for Army planners and analysts trying to anticipate future interventions.

This report provides both a historical assessment of past Army interventions as well as a set of signposts that the Army may use to better anticipate and plan for future interventions.

Study Approach

This study combined qualitative and quantitative analysis. Our quantitative analysis is based on an original dataset of U.S. ground interventions (RAND U.S. Ground Intervention Dataset [RUGID]) from 1898 to 2015. Using this dataset, we conducted a historical analysis to look for trends in past U.S. ground interventions and used statistical analysis to identify key factors that determine the likelihood and size of different types of U.S. interventions. To supplement our statistical analysis, we also conducted case studies to qualitatively explore issues such as key drivers of U.S. intervention decisions, leading indicators, resource demands and constraints, and intervention duration. We combine our qualitative and quantitative analyses to identify signposts of future interventions that can be used to help Army planners and policymakers to anticipate future interventions and to identify possible future trends in U.S. ground interventions.

Historical Analysis of U.S. Army Interventions

As shown in Figure S.1, our historical analysis revealed that COIN, combat, deterrence, and stability operations have been the four most common intervention activities and the activities that have historically involved the most U.S. troops. Our analysis of intervention size and duration also suggests that these different types of interventions place different types of strains on military resources. While combat interventions tend to involve high numbers of troops for a shorter period of time, COIN, stability operations, and deterrence tend to be longer lasting but to involve more moderate numbers of troops. In terms of geographic distribution, U.S. interventions have been concentrated in Europe, East/Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia. U.S.

involvement in the Middle East and South Asia has increased substantially since about 1990, but involvement in Europe and Asia has remained consistently high.

Determinants of the Likelihood and Size of Interventions

Anticipating U.S. military interventions is difficult due to the diverse set of factors that may prompt the United States to undertake military interventions. The question of what determines where and when the United States intervenes militarily is one that existing literature has tried to tackle. This literature identifies a number of factors that seem to shape the likelihood of U.S. military interventions, including

- characteristics of the international environment, including the degree of U.S. hegemony in the year in question and the amount of conflict ongoing in the world
- characteristics of the war or conflict itself, including the number of casualties that had previously taken place before the year in question
- characteristics of the state experiencing the war or conflict, including its overall level of economic and political development
- domestic characteristics of the United States, including available military capabilities, public opinion, and potential war weariness
- characteristics of the relationship between the United States and the state experiencing the war or conflict, including the closeness of economic, political, and social ties.

We use these factors as a starting point for our analysis, but since our historical analysis of U.S. ground interventions underscored the fact that U.S. interventions can range widely in the activities they conduct, we built separate statistical models of the likelihood and size of U.S. ground interventions in the three circumstances in which the United States is most likely to intervene—interventions into armed conflict, stability operations interventions, and deterrent interventions—and identified the factors that have historically been associated with

these outcomes. This refines existing research, which does not typically distinguish between different types of interventions, which may be driven by different factors.

Our results highlighted a diverse set of factors that appear to be promising signposts for the size and likelihood of different types of U.S. interventions. While the results varied from model to model, a few overall patterns stand out. First, the United States is generally more likely to intervene in states with which it has a close prior relationship, although these interventions into allies tend to be smaller than those in other states. Second, in most models the United States appears to scale the size of its intervention to the size of the conflict or state in which it is intervening. Token interventions into larger conflicts do not appear to be the norm. Third, characteristics of both the United States and the target state appear to influence the likelihood of U.S. interventions. While there are a number of U.S. characteristics that matter (such as capabilities, war weariness, and military assistance provided), characteristics of the target state (location, number of refugees, degree of threat, relationship with the United States) appear to have some of the most significant effects on the likelihood of an intervention. Fourth, there were a number of factors that the literature put forward as potential explanations that we did not find support for in any of our models. These included, in particular, U.S. domestic political factors and the overall level of conflict or violence in the world. Eliminating these factors from consideration as signposts was also an important finding. Tables S.1 and S.2 provide a summary of the key results for each of our models.

Do Interventions Cluster?

The analysis above highlights key factors that influence the likelihood and timing of U.S. interventions, but it does not consider whether the presence of an intervention in a given country or region might, in fact, increase the likelihood of a subsequent intervention in the same or a nearby country. There are reasons to believe that interventions might instead occur in clusters, groups of interventions that occur in the same

Figure S.1
Number of Troops Involved in U.S. Interventions, by Activity Type and Year (Truncated)
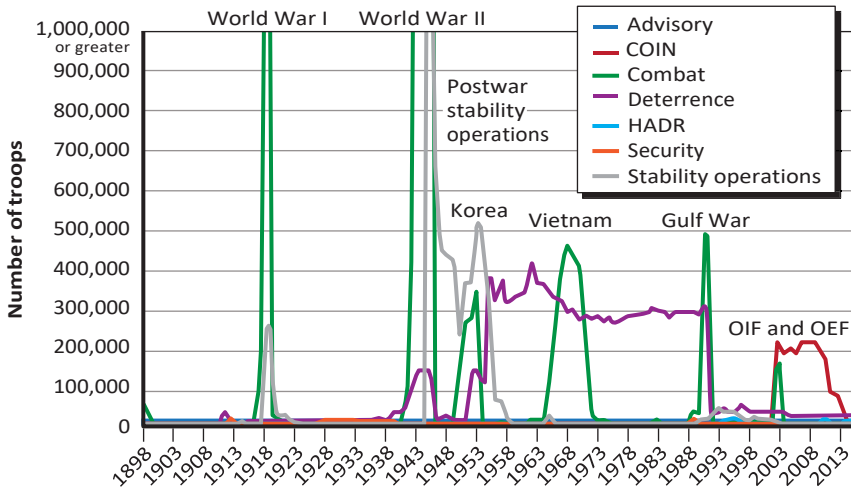
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
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geographic area and around the same time. Intervention clusters might include overlapping interventions, but may also be made up of interventions to occur one or two or even five years apart, but in the same geographic area.

We identify four possible mechanisms of intervention clustering. The *incompletion mechanism* results when the United States does not fully accomplish its intervention objectives or leaves political, economic, or social issues unresolved. In *stabilization*, an initial combat intervention results in a subsequent stabilization intervention. In *conflict diffusion*, multiple interventions are caused by a conflict, which diffuses from one country to nearby countries, forcing a diffusion of the intervention as well. The final mechanism is *buttressing*, in which one intervention leads to other interventions in nearby countries to help support the initial intervention.

To identify the likelihood and effect of clustering on intervention frequency, we considered the effect of past interventions in a given

country as well as interventions in nearby countries on the likelihood that a new intervention would be initiated in that country. We found that interventions are, in fact, likely to cluster and identified evidence of all four mechanisms discussed previously.

First, the likelihood of an intervention in a given country increases from 0.1 percent to 12 percent if the United States has intervened in that country in the past 10 years. This type of repeat intervention is driven primarily by the incompletion mechanism, instances where the initial intervention objectives are not completed, requiring a subsequent reintervention by U.S. forces. The stabilization mechanism, where the United States remains in a country to conduct peacekeeping, advisory activities, or stabilization after a combat intervention, also plays a role.

Second, the likelihood of an intervention in a given country also increases when there have been other nearby interventions (within 1,000 km) in the past five years (Figure S.2). This includes ongoing interventions as well as interventions that may have ended within the last five years. The size of this effect depends on the size of these recent nearby interventions, with the increase being most significant when the largest recent nearby intervention is relatively small.

Understanding whether or not ground interventions occur in clusters may be important for Army planners for two reasons. First, temporal clusters, when interventions occur clustered in time, may lead to aggregated demands that can place stress on military resources and personnel. Second, a finding that interventions occur in spatial clusters may provide insight into specific regions of the world that are more or less likely to have ongoing interventions.

While the statistical analyses provide insight into the factors that increase the likelihood and size of different types of U.S. military interventions, they have some limitations. Most importantly, statistical models capture patterns and trends that are generally true across all interventions, but there may be interventions that deviate from this general pattern. Case studies can provide insight into these idiosyncrasies. Case studies can also explore questions that are only partially answered by statistical analyses, for example questions about the lead time that planners have to prepare for interventions or the most common types of resource trade-offs faced.

Our case studies were selected to include cases that were both relatively well and relatively poorly predicted by the models. This mix of cases allows us to both validate our models and identify factors that appear to influence the likelihood of intervention that our models may not have captured. Our case studies focus on four key areas: assessing intervention lead time, duration, and withdrawal; analyzing resource decisions and constraints; identifying drivers and leading indicators of the intervention; and extracting key insights and implications from our cases for the Army. Our case studies revealed a number of key insights.

Table S.1
Summary of Key Determinants of Likelihood of Ground Interventions By Type

Interventions into Armed Conflict	Stability Operations	Deterrence
U.S. capabilities Previous intervention Close relationship w/ U.S.	Involvement combat phase U.S. military assistance Refugees generated Location of target	U.S. economic growth U.S. capabilities U.S. military assistance Degree of threat Close relationship w/ U.S.
War weariness	Ongoing U.S. interventions	

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Blue cells indicate factors that decrease the intervention likelihood. Red cells indicate those that increase likelihood.

Table S.2
Summary of Key Determinants of Size of Ground Interventions By Type

Interventions into Armed Conflict	Stability Operations	Deterrence
U.S. capabilities Destructiveness of war	Number of troops in combat U.S. military assistance Refugees generated	U.S. economic growth Close relationship w/ U.S. Degree of threat Wealth of target
Close relationship w/ U.S. War weariness	Close relationship w/ U.S. Wealth of the target	

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Blue cells indicate factors that decrease the intervention likelihood. Red cells indicate those that increase likelihood.

- **Interventions often occur with little lead time for planning and preparation:** Our cases suggest that a large percentage of U.S. ground interventions are relatively unexpected, providing planners with little time to prepare, making attention to signposts more important.
- **Interventions often last significantly longer than intended or expected:** Our cases reveal that the expected and actual duration of interventions often differ substantially, with the actual intervention lasting significantly longer than anticipated. These unexpectedly long interventions can place stress on resources and planning. This disconnect may occur because the individuals defining the expected length are outside the Department of Defense (DoD) community or because U.S. interventions that are expected to be limited end up continuing after the initial combat phase, as either long-running stability operations or enduring deterrent interventions.
- **Closer attention to key intervention signposts could increase preparation and planning time and allow for better anticipation of interventions:** Our cases highlighted a number of signposts of potential future interventions that military planners can use to better anticipate and prepare for coming interventions (including relationship with the United States, territorial claims, previous interventions, elite and public opinion, and presence of a multinational coalition).

Signposts of Future Interventions

The most valuable contribution of this report to Army planners and to the policymaking community more generally is likely to be the identification of signposts and signpost metrics that can be used to anticipate future interventions and to identify and track those countries, regions, and conflicts that seem to be at highest risk for future ground interventions. We developed these signposts by drawing from both our statistical analysis and our case studies. In this report, we use the term "signpost" to refer to a specific leading indicator that a military planner

or analyst could observe or track to assess the likelihood of a new intervention in a given time and place. Signposts can be characteristics of a target state, characteristics of the United States, or characteristics of the international system. Signposts can also be used to define "danger zones" or sets of circumstances where the chance of a new intervention appears to be high enough to warrant more substantial preparation. Importantly, we intend the signposts to serve as heuristic tools and guides for Army strategists and planners, rather than deterministic predictors. Tables S.3 through S.5 offer summaries of the key signposts that we identified for our three types of interventions (into armed conflict, stability operations, and deterrence). Our signposts include identification of a metric and a short description of how that specific metric might provide insight into the likelihood of future interventions. Planners and analysts should use these different signposts together, looking

Figure S.2
Effect of Recent Nearby Interventions and Largest Nearby Intervention on Likelihood of New U.S. Intervention in Countries with Prior U.S. Intervention
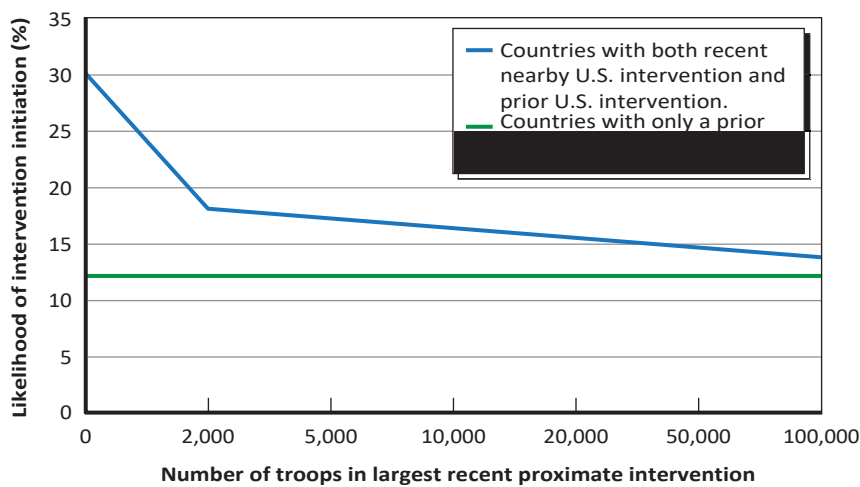
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
NOTE: Recent proximate interventions are interventions within 1,000 km in the ive years prior. Prior U.S. interventions include only interventions in 10 years prior.
Case Study Insights.

RAND *RR1831A-S.2*

for those crises, conflicts, countries, or threats where there seems to be a greater likelihood for a possible intervention on several different dimensions and then focus their planning and preparation on those specific scenarios. Furthermore, assessing and tracking the number of these locations could give planners a better sense of the possible future demand for U.S. intervention forces and contribute to overall better force management, training, development and planning. Here, we highlight some of the signposts with the most significant effects on the likelihood of interventions and that might be most useful to Army planners.

- Interventions into countries with closer relationships with the United States are more likely. This is true for both interventions into armed conflict and deterrent interventions. Interventions in both cases are twice as likely when the target is an ally.
- Interventions into countries where the United States has intervened previously are significantly more likely. For interventions into armed conflict, interventions into countries where the United States has intervened previously are 6.5 times as likely. For stability operations, involvement in a combat phase of a conflict increases the likelihood of a follow-on stability operation by about four times.
- The United States is more likely to intervene in more destructive war. As the number of battle deaths in a conflict increase, so does the likelihood of an intervention.
- After significant U.S. combat deaths, the likelihood of an intervention into an ongoing conflict decreases by about six percent for about nine years. However, this war weariness effect does dissipate and does not prevent other types of U.S. interventions.
- Stability operation interventions are more likely in cases where there are large numbers of refugees and where the target country has received military assistance in prior years. Prior military assistance also increases the likelihood of deterrent interventions.
- Stability operations are more likely in the Middle East (2.8 percent) and Europe (2 percent) than in other regions.
- Deterrent interventions in cases of a territorial claim tend to be more likely and larger.

The signposts identified in this report can also be applied directly to current and emerging threats that are of immediate interest to policymakers as well as military planners and strategists. Below, we offer examples of ways that the signposts listed above offer insight into the crises and regions where future interventions may be most likely.

- **New conflicts or crises affecting partners (e.g., allies, military assistance recipients, location).** *Continued spread of the ISIS threat may trigger new U.S. interventions in partners in the Mideast and Southeast Asia.*
- **New threats including especially territorial claims against partners and allies.** *This marker suggests a need to be attentive to the need for a U.S. deterrent intervention in response to Russian aggression against its neighbors. It also suggests the potential for additional U.S. interventions in East or Southeast Asia to contain or deter China.*
- **Conflicts or crises in countries where the United States has intervened before.** *Conflicts or crises in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, or Central America may trigger repeat interventions. Threats such as ISIS as well as escalating criminal violence in Central America could be the proximate trigger of such events.*
- **Conflicts with high battle deaths or large refugee flows.** *While the United States has not sent large numbers of ground troops into Syria, there are warning signs (including refugees and battle deaths) that suggest this possibility.*
- **Involvement of U.S. troops in combat phase of conflict (often leads to long running stability operations or deterrence).** *This signpost suggests the likelihood of longer term continuation of stability operation interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria.*

Table S.3
Key Signposts and Metrics for Interventions into Armed Conflict

Signpost	Metric	Substantive Effect
Relationship with United States	Defensive alliance	Intervention into U.S. ally is **2x more likely** than non-ally, but interventions in non-allies tend to be **larger (4,350 vs. 280 personnel**, on average other factors held constant) *Likelihood: 32% if ally; 16% if not*
Destructiveness of conflict	Cumulative battle deaths	Likelihood of intervention **rises from 15% to 30% as battle deaths rise from 1,000 to 60,000** *Example battle death figures through 2015: Syria 145,233; Ukraine 4,946*
Previous intervention	Previous U.S. intervention in target	If United States intervened in past, intervention is **6.5x more likely** *Likelihood: 35.6% if yes; 5.5% if no*
War weariness	Years since U.S. combat deaths	Interventions **6% less likely for ~9 years** after significant U.S. combat deaths
U.S. capabilities	Relative military capabilities	Intervention **less likely** as relative U.S. capabilities decline
Elite & public opinion	Elite attitudes/ public opinion	Elite/public support **increases** likelihood of intervention

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Table S.4
Key Signposts and Metrics for Stability Operations Interventions

Signpost	Metric	Substantive Effect
Involvement in combat phase	U.S. involvement in combat phase	Intervention is about **4x more likely** if United States was involved in combat phase *Likelihood: 10.5% if yes; 2.8% if no*
Number of troops in combat phase	Number of U.S. troops in combat phase	Size of stability operation **increases about 300 troops** for every 1,000 troops in combat operation
Military assistance	U.S. military assistance spending	Intervention **more likely** if United States has provided military assistance in past *Likelihood: 1.8% if no assistance in prior year, 3.7% if $1,000,000 in prior year*
Number of refugees humanitarian crisis	Cumulative number of refugees	Intervention **more likely** as number of refugees rises *Likelihood: 0.8% w/no refugees, 5.7% if 100,000 refugees*
Location of target country	Region of target state	Interventions in **Europe (2.8x) and Mideast (2x) are more likely** than other regions *Likelihood: Europe 7.4%; Mideast 5.9%; Others 2.7%*
Multinational coalition	Presence of multinational coalition	**Increases** likelihood of intervention

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

**Table S.5
Key Signposts and Metrics for Deterrent Interventions**

Signpost	Metric	Substantive Effect
Degree of threat	Territorial claims	Interventions **more likely and larger (1,910 troops v. 407 troops)** where there is a territorial claim
Relationship with United States	Defensive alliance	Interventions into U.S. allies are **2x more likely** than those into non-allies *Likelihood: 8.7% if allies; 4.7% if not*
Military assistance	U.S. military assistance spending	Likelihood of intervention **more than 3x as military assistance increases from $0 to $1 mill** *Likelihood: 0.14% at $0 to 0.50% at $1 mill*
Rate of U.S. economic growth	Rate of U.S. GDP growth	Likelihood of intervention increases **nearly 2x as U.S. GDP growth rises from 0% to 2.5%** *Likelihood: 0.12% at 0% growth to 0.22% at 2.5% growth*
Involvement in combat phase	U.S. presence in combat phase	Intervention **more likely** if United States was involved in previous combat phase

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Acknowledgments

Abbreviations

ABCT	Armored Brigade Combat Team
APC	Armored Personnel Carrier
AWSS	Authorized Weapon Storage Site
BCT	Brigade Combat Team
CASF	Composite Air Strike Force
CINC	Composite Index of National Capability
COIN	counterinsurgency
COW	Correlates of War
DCAS	Defense Casualty Analysis System
DoD	Department of Defense
ERI	European Reassurance Initiative
EUFOR	European Force
FEAF	Far East Air Forces
GK dollars	Gheary-Khamis dollars
HADR	Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief
ICOW	Issue Correlates of War
IFOR	Implementation Force

ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KMAG	Korean Military Advisors Group
KMT	Nationalist Government of China
LAF	Lebanese Armed Forces
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MAU	Marine Amphibious Unit
MEU	Marine Expeditionary Unit
MNF	Multinational Force
MP	Military Police
NMC	National Military Capabilities
NSC	National Security Council
OAS	Organization of American States
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OPTEMPO	Operational Tempo
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSYOP	psychological operations
QRF	Quick Reaction Force
ROC	Republic of China

ROK	Republic of Korea
RUGID	RAND U.S. Ground Intervention Dataset
SFOR	Stabilization Force
SNA	Somalia National Army
SOF	Special Operations Forces
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
U.N.	United Nations
UNITAF	Unified Task Force
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USMC	United States Marine Corps
WMD	Weapon of Mass Destruction

Introduction

Over the past 100 years, the U.S. Army has engaged in dozens of major ground deployments, serving in highly varied environments and completing missions that range from peacekeeping to conventional war to humanitarian relief. In fact, even as the overall incidence of inter- and intrastate conflict has declined in recent years, the frequency of U.S. military interventions in overseas areas has risen, reaching a peak in the mid-2000s and remaining at high levels through to the present. These interventions have involved millions of U.S. troops, cost billions of dollars, and placed significant demands on Army leadership, planning, and resources.

These challenges are unlikely to abate in the near term. To that end, the Army would benefit from an enhanced ability to anticipate the types and conditions of overseas military interventions it is most likely to be called upon to undertake in the future. In fact, one of the reasons that ground interventions are so challenging for Army personnel and resources is that they are often unexpected and have requirements that are simultaneously diverse and dynamic. The lack of lead time and uncertainty about the nature and conditions of the intervention makes advance planning difficult and creates logistical and training challenges. This ability to anticipate potential future interventions would allow the Army both to retain the flexibility to meet a diverse set of future challenges and to conduct some advance planning, and estimate the types of requirements and demands that possible future interventions might entail. These estimates could be further used to inform training, acquisition, and recruiting decisions and to better prepare the Army to meet future demands.

The ability to anticipate where and when future interventions might occur can be enhanced by a clear understanding of historical trends in U.S. ground interventions and an identification of the key factors that drive the likelihood and size of U.S. interventions of different types (e.g., combat, stability operations, humanitarian, etc.). However, it also requires a way to translate these driving factors into actionable metrics that can be used by Army planners to track and monitor where and when future interventions are most likely and what the demands of these future interventions might be. Existing research on U.S. military interventions provides some insight into these questions, identifying a range of different factors that seem to affect the decisions of policymakers. However, this research also has a number of shortcomings that limit its utility for Army planners and analysts trying to anticipate where and when the Army might be involved in ground interventions.

There are several reasons for the shortcomings in existing literature. First, although the literature on drivers of military interventions is rather extensive, there is significant disagreement across studies about the factors that do and do not affect the likelihood of U.S. military interventions. This is largely due to the fact that different studies have different definitions of what is included as an intervention in the empirical analysis. Some consider all means of interventions (air, ground, naval) while others focus only on ground interventions. Some include only large interventions, while others have lower minimum troops thresholds. Some focus only on U.S. interventions, but others also consider foreign interventions. These differences in specification help to explain the sometimes muddled and often conflicting results. Second, most existing studies also do not distinguish between different types of interventions, for example those that occur into an ongoing conflict, those that support peacekeeping, or those intended to deter conflict. It is likely, however, that these different types of interventions are driven by different key factors, so grouping them together in empirical analysis may be counterproductive. Third, a large number of existing studies include limited time frames, focusing on the period from 1946 to the late 1990s. This means that the bulk of their analysis focuses on interventions during the Cold War. It is unclear how representative

the key factors that drove interventions in this time period are of the determinants of U.S. interventions more broadly. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, most existing work focuses primarily on identifying the drivers of U.S. military interventions, without considering related questions of importance to Army planners, such as factors that might affect the timing of U.S. interventions or the size of these interventions, or translating these results into actionable metrics that the Army could use to assist in intervention preparation, planning, or execution. These shortcomings significantly limit the value of much existing literature to Army planners and strategists.

This report addresses the shortcomings and gaps of existing literature by conducting a more nuanced assessment of the drivers of U.S. ground interventions. First, we focus explicitly on ground interventions with a 100-person-year threshold, excluding interventions of other types.[1] Second, we consider a longer time period, including interventions from 1900 to the present. Third, we construct three different sets of models, one for interventions into armed conflict, one for stability operations in conflict and post-conflict environments, and one for deterrent interventions. In addition, we separately consider the key factors influencing the incidence of military interventions and, once the initial decision to intervene has been made, the size of that intervention. Finally, we use our analysis to provide the Army with actionable signposts and metrics that can be used to identify countries, conflicts, and crises that are at highest risk for a U.S. intervention. These signposts will allow the Army to better anticipate and plan for future interventions, and can improve both near- and medium-term force-planning decisions.

Study Approach

To address the limitations of existing literature and to explore the questions and issues motivating this study, we adopt a mixed method

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[1] This means the intervention might have 100 people for one year or significantly more for a shorter time period.

approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Our quantitative analysis is based on an original dataset of U.S. ground interventions (RAND U.S. Ground Intervention Dataset [RUGID]) from 1898 to 2015. The dataset includes information on intervention activity, duration, and size, as well as information on the units involved. Using this dataset, we conduct a historical analysis to look for trends in past U.S. ground interventions and use statistical analysis to identify key factors that determine the likelihood and size of different types of U.S. interventions. As noted above, we use three different sets of models: one for interventions into armed conflict, one for stability operations in conflict and post-conflict environments, and one for deterrent interventions. While there are some factors that are the same across models, there are also many factors that are unique to each specific type of intervention.[2] To supplement our statistical analysis, we also conduct case studies to qualitatively explore issues such as key drivers of U.S. intervention decisions, leading indicators, resource demands and constraints, and intervention duration. We combine our qualitative and quantitative analyses to identify signposts of future interventions that can be used to help Army planners and policymakers anticipate future interventions and to identify possible future trends in U.S. ground interventions. We operationalize these signposts by developing a number of specific metrics that planners and military analysts can use to identify regions with a higher risk of a future U.S. intervention and to monitor the likelihood of U.S. interventions in specific countries, crises, or conflict. Finally, we provide a number of examples of how these signposts might be applied to assess the likelihood of intervention in today's ongoing conflicts or in response to key emerging threats.

The analysis and findings presented in this report make a number of advances over previous work on military interventions. First, as will be described in the next chapter, the dataset used for our analysis has

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[2] Of course, an assessment of the key factors that drive interventions will necessarily focus on the past, and it is unlikely that the interventions of the past will precisely mirror the interventions of the future. However, even if the interventions of the future are distinct from those in the past, it is likely that many of the key factors that have mattered to U.S. intervention decisions in the past will continue to matter in some form in the future.

a number of advantages compared to other datasets of interventions, including detailed information on activity type and number of troops by year. Second, whereas previous work has looked at the determinants and drivers of interventions writ large, our analysis considers the specific drivers of interventions in three specific situations: into armed conflict, deterrence, and stability operations. Furthermore, we do find significant differences in the key drivers of military interventions by type. Third, we assess not only factors associated with the likelihood of interventions, but also those factors that determine the size of intervention, results that have direct relevance for Army planners. Fourth, our results cast significant doubt on the relevance of certain key factors that are commonly thought to be important predictors of military interventions, including the number of wars in the world and domestic politics. Fifth, we use our statistical models to identify signposts and signpost metrics that Army planners can use to identify conflicts and crises where a future U.S. intervention may be more likely.

Organization of This Report

This remainder of the report is organized as follows. In Chapter Two, we offer an introduction to RUGID, including a definition of key variables and a discussion of important coding decisions. This is followed by a historical analysis of U.S. military interventions including trends in activities and regions as well as an exploration of the relationship between the size and duration of an intervention. In Chapter Three, we include a discussion of the statistical analysis of key determinants of the likelihood and size for three different types of U.S. ground interventions: interventions into armed conflict, stability operations conducted in conflict and post-conflict environments, and deterrent interventions. Here we also discuss the methodology and results as well as the implications of these results for future U.S. military interventions. In Chapter Four, we address the question of whether interventions cluster in time and space, an important issue for military planners and strategists. In Chapter Five, we summarize our case studies, conducted to further explore the key drivers of ground interventions as well as to explore issues such

as lead time, resources, duration, and withdrawal. We synthesize the statistical and case study analyses to identify early warning indicators and signposts that the Army can use to anticipate military interventions in Chapter Six. The final chapter summarizes our results and discusses implications for the Army. The report also has four appendices, including additional details on our dataset, the detailed written case studies on which Chapter Five is based, additional historical analysis of unit type use in past interventions, and some additional statistical material, including regression tables and related technical details.

Historical Analysis of U.S. Army Interventions

Before starting our analysis of the key drivers of U.S. intervention decisions, we explored historical patterns in U.S. ground interventions, looking at trends in number of interventions by activity type, size, and location and investigating the types of situations in which the United States is most likely to intervene. To do this, we developed an original dataset covering all ground interventions since 1898. This chapter describes the dataset and our historical analysis of U.S. ground interventions over the period 1898 to 2015.

Our historical analysis revealed several key points, all discussed in more detail below. First, our analysis reveals that counterinsurgency (COIN), Combat, Deterrence, and Stability Operations have been the four most common intervention activities and the activities that have historically involved the most U.S. troops. These different types of interventions place different types of strain on military resources. While combat interventions tend to involve high numbers of troops for a shorter period of time, COIN, stability operations, and deterrence tend to be longer lasting but to involve more moderate numbers of troops. In terms of geographic distribution, U.S. interventions have been concentrated in a number of key regions, including Europe, East/Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia. Third, the unit type analysis highlighted some of the most frequently used unit types in U.S. ground interventions, including sustainment, combat arms, and combat support, as well as revealing the increasingly frequent use of Special Operations Forces (SOF) units, including civil affairs and psychological operations (PSYOP). Finally, our analysis highlighted three

key circumstances in which the United States is most likely to intervene: interventions into armed conflict, stability operations interventions, and deterrence.

RUGID

RUGID covers the years 1898 to 2015. The start date was chosen to correspond with the start of the Spanish American War, an event cited by many as marking the emergence of the United States on the international stage. For the purpose of this dataset, we defined an intervention to include any deployment of U.S. ground troops on the territory of another country that included at least 100 "person years." This size threshold could include 100 troops deployed for one year or a larger number of troops deployed for a shorter period of time. We included this threshold because we are most interested in those interventions that have force structure and resource implications for the Army. While interventions that fall short of this threshold may be important for a number of reasons, they are unlikely to place the military's force structure under any serious stress. Because our focus is on deployments rather than forward presence, we do not include troops that are stationed overseas as part of the U.S. global posture. For example, we include U.S. forces in Germany until 1989 when they were stationed there as a deterrent force against the USSR. However, after 1989, with the fall of the Soviet Union, they are considered to be "forward presence" rather than an intervention per se and as such are not included in the dataset. Troops in South Korea, however, are included in the dataset as deterrent forces because they are still focused directly on deterring North Korea.

While we include ground forces from any service, we also did not include military interventions that involved only naval or air forces. This was largely due to the challenge involved in collecting information on every single naval deployment or air campaign. It would also be difficult to define what exactly is included as an intervention when we move from ground interventions to other types. For example, do naval deployments include only formal, named operations or is any time a

carrier group deploys to the seas near China or into the Persian Gulf also a deployment? And what level of air involvement is needed to be termed an intervention? Is an interdiction campaign sufficient or are air strikes required? Expanding our database to include air and naval operations would be a worthwhile next step, but for this first iteration, we focused only on ground interventions.

For each intervention included in the dataset, we have included the countries involved, start and end date, primary activities, duration in months, and number of troops present in each year of the dataset. The dataset captures changes in the size, location, and primary activities of a given intervention over time. We have also collected information on the unit types involved in each intervention. The unit type data also has two versions, one that identifies unit types for the U.S. Army and one that identifies U.S. Marine Corps units involved in these interventions. Appendix A provides additional technical details on the dataset and its organization.

Our dataset makes a number of advancements over existing databases of ground interventions. The two most comprehensive existing datasets of military interventions include the Military Interventions by Powerful States (MIPS) dataset and the International Military Intervention dataset (IMI), both of which we drew on when building RUGID. The MIPS data includes interventions for the years 1945–2003 by five major states, the United States, Russia, China, the United Kingdom, and France. The MIPS data defines an intervention as "a use of armed force that involves the official deployment of at least 500 regular military personnel (ground, air, or naval) to attain immediate term political objectives through action against a foreign adversary."[1] The IMI data includes interventions by all nations from the period 1946–2005. It includes air, naval, and ground interventions and defines an intervention as "Military interventions are defined operationally in this collection as the movement of regular troops or forces (airborne, seaborne, shelling, etc.) of one country inside another, in the context of

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[1] Patricia L. Sullivan and Michael T. Koch, Military Interventions by Powerful States, Codebook, Version 2.0, 2011, p. 3.

some political issue or dispute."[2] Each of these datasets includes information on the intervention objective, key states involved, and types of forces (air, naval, or ground). However, each also has some limitations. For example, the MIPS data has a relatively high threshold for inclusion in terms of numbers of troops but not threshold for duration, which affects the set of interventions included. It also lacks information on the size of the intervention. On the other hand, the IMI data includes all movement of troops, regardless of size and duration, which means it captures many operations that are more accurately categorized as border skirmishes than interventions. It does include some general information on size, but this information is categorical and so does not give a clear view of how many troops are involved at different points in the intervention.

From the perspective of this project, the most significant advantages of the RUGID data are

- the addition of information on the activities conducted during the intervention. Unlike other datasets, we include up to three different activity types. These activity types can change over the course of the intervention
- the inclusion of information on numbers of troops involved in the intervention, by year, which allows for analysis of how the intervention changes in size over time
- the inclusion of information on the types of units involved in each intervention
- a more comprehensive set of U.S. interventions. The RUGID data covers a significantly longer time period
- a clearer definition of what is and is not included as an intervention as compared to other datasets. As it pertains to ground interventions, our dataset has a lower threshold than the MIPS data, allowing us to capture additional interventions of interest, but we use a higher threshold than the IMI data, which allows us to screen out some of the very small interventions.

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[2] Emizet Kisangani and Jeffrey Pickering, International Military Interventions Dataset, Codebook, January 2008, p. 2.

As noted above, we focus our dataset and our analysis on ground interventions. This means that results of our analysis and the signposts that we identify will apply only to interventions that involve a ground component and not to air or naval interventions. This is significant, since it may be that the United States only sends ground forces to deal with the "hard cases"; that is, those cases where simply relying on air or naval power will be insufficient to address the underlying challenge or to achieve the political objectives. However, it is also true that ground interventions are the ones that place the greatest strain on U.S. military personnel and resources. These are also the interventions with the greatest implications for Army manpower and planning. As a result, there is value in focusing on ground interventions and the factors that are associated with a higher likelihood and larger size of U.S. interventions, even if these results are not generalizable to air and naval interventions.

Variables in the Intervention Data

The intervention dataset includes 98 interventions, which amount to 1,404 country years over the period 1898–2015. As noted above, for each intervention we coded several different dimensions. In the discussion below, we offer a brief discussion of key variables. A full definition of each variable, as well as rules for all coding decisions, is included in Appendix A.

- **Activity Type:** We defined seven intervention types: Advisory/Foreign Internal Defense, COIN, Conventional Combat, Deterrence, Humanitarian (Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief [HADR]), Security, and Stability Operations. Each intervention can have up to a total of three activity types, although the first type is considered "primary." The assessment of activity type was based on a careful reading of each case, as well as discussions with RAND colleagues and colleagues within the DoD. We developed this list of activity types after discussions with RAND experts and review of Army doctrine to understand the ways in which the Army classifies its operations. These activity types were chosen to capture the full range of major activities that ground interventions

(specifically those that meet our troop threshold) carry out. We did not intend to include every possible type of activity that U.S. military personnel conduct during ground interventions in our taxonomy, but rather to capture some of the most common activities undertaken by ground interventions over the past 100 years and to categorize our interventions into these activity type categories. In Appendix A, we provide definitions for each activity type.[3]

- **Intervention Size:** In the country year dataset, we code the number of troops involved in each year of the intervention. In the intervention dataset, we offer minimum, maximum, and typical estimates of total troops. We also place interventions into one of three size categories: Small (100–500 troops), Medium (501–20,000), and Large (20,001 or greater).
- **Duration:** We coded the number of months of each intervention as of January 2016.
- **Region:** We defined nine regions: East and Southeast Asia, Europe, Eurasia, East and Southern Africa, Central America/Caribbean, Mideast and North Africa, North America, South and Central Asia, South America, and West Africa.

While collecting the data we had to make a number of decisions regarding how specific deployments of U.S. ground forces were coded. First, many U.S. ground interventions are long lasting and involve many phases from their start to their end. For example, U.S. involvement in Europe after 1941 involved a combat phase, followed by stability operations, followed by deterrence. However, each of these interventions had a distinctly different purpose and involved different numbers and even types of troops. We coded U.S. activities as a single intervention for as long as the overarching purpose of the intervention

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[3] Advisory/Foreign Internal Defense: Training and military assistance missions; COIN: Counterinsurgency, operations against a nontraditional ally, using nontraditional military tactics, and in a nontraditional environment; Combat: Conventional war-fighting against a conventional enemy; Deterrence: Activities to deter adversaries or protect allies; Humanitarian: Refugee relief, aid and assistance in the case of natural disasters or in the aftermath of war; Security: Operations to protect U.S. assets and civilians overseas; Stability operations: Peacekeeping, reconstruction, and other activities to establish law and order, end violence.

remained the same. Once the intervention changed in nature or objective, we coded it as a new intervention. In the above example regarding Europe, then, we would have coded three separate interventions. However, we required clear proof that the purpose of the intervention had shifted in order to code a new intervention. In some cases, the distinction between one and several interventions followed a change in the name of the operation, but this was not always the case. For instance, there were many named deterrent interventions in the Persian Gulf. However, because these had a single purpose and involved a continuous U.S. presence, this is coded as a single intervention.[4]

The treatment of World War I and World War II requires additional discussion. For the purpose of the intervention dataset, the treatment of the world wars is fairly straightforward. World War I counts as a single intervention, and World War II is treated as two, the Pacific and Atlantic theaters. There are also a number of smaller interventions associated with World War II that are coded separately because they had distinct start and end dates and so can be considered as having involved separate deployment decisions. These include deterrent deployments to Iceland, Greenland, and Allied bases in the Caribbean. Each of these deployments has a distinct start and end date that predates the U.S. involvement in World War II. Therefore, while each was undoubtedly closely related to the U.S. decision to intervene in World War II, the specific decision to deploy troops to these locations was separate. In the country year dataset, however, the geographic complexity of fighting in the Second World War prompted us to make a different accommodation. Both of the world wars involved a large number of troops deployed in a large number of countries with a fluid presence, meaning that troops might be fighting in one country one day, and a different country the next. As a result, determining the number of troops in any one country at a given point in time would have been extremely difficult to achieve with any precision. Thus, for the major interventions

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[4]   Included in our Persian Gulf deterrent intervention are Operation Southern Watch, Operation Vigilant Warrior, Operation Vigilant Sentinel, Operation Desert Strike, Operation Desert Thunder, Operation Desert Fox, Operation Desert Focus, Exercise Intrinsic Action/Desert Spring, and Exercise Iris Gold.

in World War I and World War II, we did not attempt to distinguish U.S. presence based on country. Instead, we created a European theater "country" for both World War I and World War II and a Pacific theater "country" for World War II. We then coded the aggregated theater for each appropriate "country year." For our statistical analysis, described in Chapter Four, this required that we then hand code the potential explanatory variables related to these cases. As a final point, for the related interventions in Iceland, Greenland, and the Allied bases in the Caribbean we coded individual country years as normal for other interventions.

Variables in the Unit Type Data

The unit type data supplements the data on ground interventions by identifying the specific types of units involved in each intervention using two taxonomies, one for the Army, shown in Table 2.1, and for the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC), shown in Appendix A. We focus on the Army taxonomy and data here, and provide more details on the USMC version of the data in Appendix A.

We faced a number of challenges in building the unit type dataset. First, documentation on the specific types of units involved in past Army interventions is not always readily available or complete. While the records of some interventions, especially more recent ones, are relatively easy to collect, information on interventions from the early 1900s is more difficult to find. Second, the structure of the Army has changed significantly since the early 1900s, so building a taxonomy that could be used to classify unit types involved in all interventions in the dataset consistently was challenging. After consulting a number of RAND experts on Army force structure, we developed a taxonomy that included eight broad categories that were flexible enough to apply adequately over time. We also developed more specific designations within each category. Below, we provide a list of the broad unit type categories for the Army taxonomy, brief definitions, and the specific unit types that fall within each larger unit type bin. The taxonomy we used for the Marine Corps units is included in Appendix A.

Importantly, it is not uncommon for units trained for one specialty to be required to serve in other roles during the course of

Table 2.1
Army Unit Type Taxonomy

Category	Subcategory
Combat Arms	Armor, Mechanized Infantry, Light Infantry, Cavalry
Fires	Field Artillery
Aviation	Attack, other Rotary
Special Forces	Ranger, Aviation, PSYOP, Civil Affairs
Combat Support	Chemical, Military Police (MP), Maintenance, Signal/ Communications
Engineer	Engineer (all types)
Intelligence	Military Intelligence, Reconnaissance
Sustainment	Combat Service Support, Sustainment Brigade, Quartermasters, Transport, Supply, Ordnance, Public Affairs

an intervention. For example, soldiers trained as infantry soldiers may find themselves acting as Military Police or carrying out humanitarian relief activities, either because these are the primary intervention tasks or because the deployed force is understaffed to fulfill these specific roles. Capturing this cross-use of units is difficult because detailed records documenting how each specific unit is used over the course of an intervention rarely exist. Where possible, however, we have tried to document instances where one type of unit was used to serve a different function. These instances are noted both by a color-coding scheme within the dataset and text notes where appropriate. Details on the coding and the format of the database are included in Appendix A. We felt that this type of cross-use was important because it provides insight into areas where the deployed force may have been undermanned or appropriately manned, identifies types of units that may be in particularly high demand during specific types of deployments, and highlights occupations where deployment-related stress may be particularly severe.

The unit type data is a particularly important part of the RUGID data and provides significant value to the Army as a data source that

can be used to understand historical patterns in the types of units that have been involved in specific types of military interventions. In the discussion below, we will provide some analysis of these trends and patterns.

Historical Trends in U.S. Ground Interventions

An analysis of historical trends in U.S. ground interventions is useful for two key reasons. First, although the past is not a good predictor of the future, past trends in military interventions may reveal patterns that are likely to continue into the future. These may include patterns in common activities, regions where interventions appear most frequently, or typical trends in intervention size and duration. Second, historical analysis of trends in military interventions may reveal ways in which interventions have changed fundamentally over time and may provide insight into the types of factors likely to contribute to the size or frequency of U.S. military interventions. In the remainder of this chapter we discuss the key historical trends in military interventions and what the implications of these trends may mean for future U.S. Army ground interventions. As a starting point, Figure 2.1 shows the number of ongoing U.S. ground interventions in each year between 1900 and 2015. According to the figure, the number of ongoing U.S. interventions reached a peak around 1960 after increasing steadily since 1945. After 1960, the number of U.S. interventions decreased until the late 1970s before rising again in the 1990s. In the post–Cold War period, the number of U.S. interventions declined briefly, but increased again in the late 1990s and early 2000s. U.S. intervention activity has fallen since about 2004, but has remained at a relatively high level compared to historical averages. The key insight emerging from this figure is that demand for U.S. forces remains rather high, even as international conflict has declined since the end of the Cold War, suggesting that there may, in fact, be little relationship between the demand for U.S. troops and the number of ongoing conflicts.

Figure 2.1
Number of Ongoing U.S. Interventions by Year
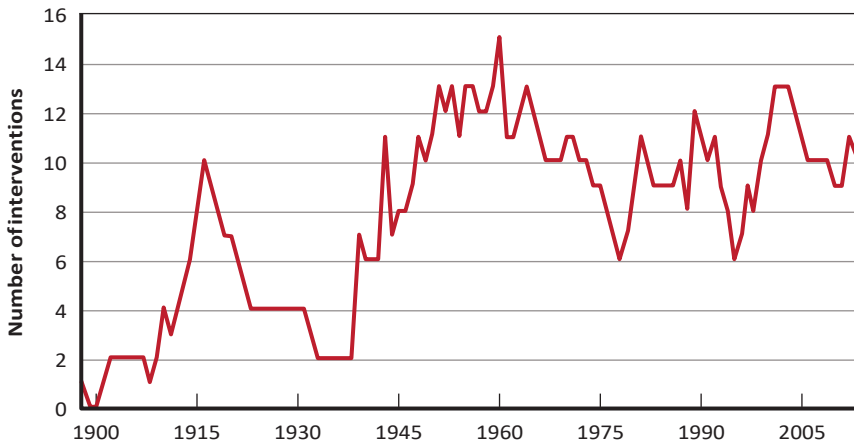
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-2.1*

Trends in Activity Types

However, to fully assess the historical demand for U.S. forces, it is necessary to look not only at the number of interventions but also the number of troops involved in these interventions. A few very large interventions may place greater stress on the U.S. military than a large number of very small interventions. Figures 2.2a and 2.2b illustrate the number of troops involved in ground interventions by primary activity type and year. The graphs illustrate not only the trends in the total number of troops, but trends in activity type. The graphs make clear that four key types of activities have dominated U.S. military intervention activities since 1900: combat COIN, stability operations, and deterrence. However, these different activity types have not been equally distributed over time. Conventional combat operations were most common in the period up to 1945 but have been less frequent since, although they made resurgence during the Korean and Vietnam wars. In the period after the end of World War II, stability operations dominate U.S. military interventions and operations overseas. These operations included activities in Europe, both in allies such as Britain

and France and former adversaries such as Germany and Italy, as well as in Korea after the end of the Korean War. However, the period during which stability operations dominated was relatively short-lived. From the early 1950s through the end of the Cold War, deterrence against the Soviet Union was by far the dominant activity of U.S. military interventions. Since 2001, COIN operations, primarily in Iraq and Afghanistan, have dominated U.S. intervention activities. However, it is important to note that although COIN interventions have involved the largest number of troops since 2001, at the same time there have been a large number of advisory and train-and-assist missions that have involved a smaller number of troops. As of January 2016, the United States has ten interventions still ongoing. These include: Operation Atlantic Resolve (deterrent deployment in the Baltics); the Multinational Force and Observers in Sinai; a long-running deterrent deployment in Korea; a long-running military advisory force in the Philippines; a number of training missions in Honduras; a peacekeeping force in Kosovo (part of the multinational Kosovo Force [KFOR]); a continuing stability operation force in Afghanistan; military support provided to African-led counter–Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) operations as well as a similar mission against Boko Haram; and counter-ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham) missions under Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq.

In addition to looking at trends in activity type, it is also useful to look at the total number of troops deployed over time. The number of troops involved in U.S. ground interventions was significantly higher in the period between 1940 and 1990 than it was before or after. It was also highest, unsurprisingly, during the two world wars. Outside of these two exceptional conflicts, the numbers of troops involved in interventions was highest in the immediate post World War II period (stability operations), during the Vietnam War, and during the brief period of the Gulf War. Troop levels have been significantly lower since the end of the Cold War, but rose after 2001 from below 100,000 to over 300,000. Importantly, many of the deployments depicted on the graph have made use of rotational forces, meaning that a given unit remains in theater for some period of time before rotating home and being replaced by other units. A rotational presence places significant

Figure 2.2a
Number of Troops Involved in U.S. Interventions, by Activity Type and Year (Truncated)
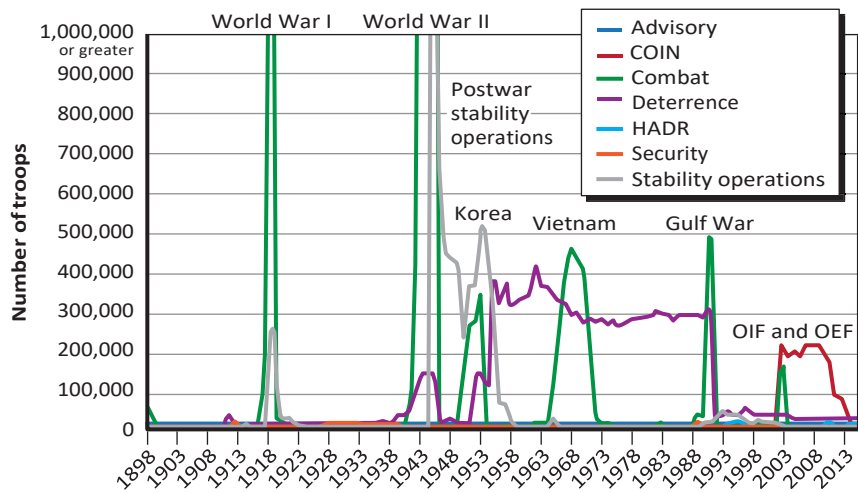
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-2.2a*

Figure 2.2b
Number of Troops Involved in U.S. Interventions, by Activity Type and Year
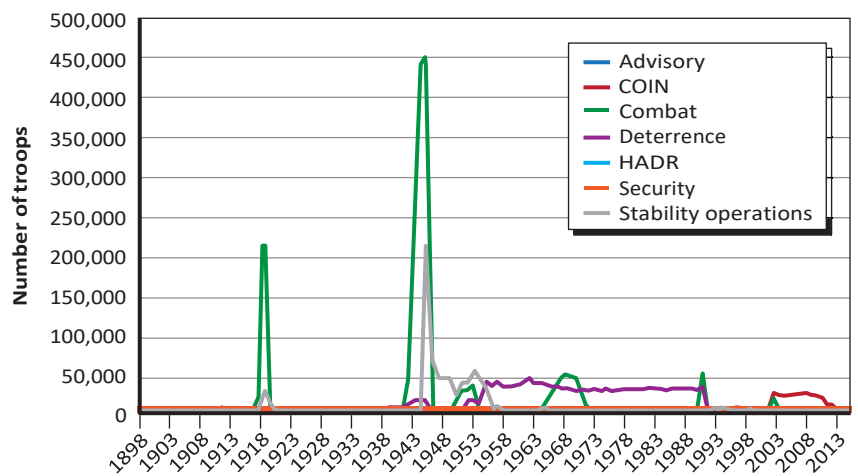
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-2.2b*

demands on the force because it magnifies that number of troops required to sustain the intervention. For instance, at a rotation rate of 1:2 (one year deployed and two years at home), which was typical during the height of both OEF and OIF, requires a force size of about three times the deployed presence assuming that all troops rotate and deploy at this rate. Also significant is the fact that the military overall is significantly smaller in size now than it was in previous decades, particularly during the Cold War. Furthermore, the size of the military during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam was augmented by a large number of draftees. Since the shift to an all-volunteer military, the Army has relied heavily on the National Guard and Reserve. While we were unable to separate out the numbers of National Guard and Reserve personnel from the number of other Army or Marine Corps personnel, the troop number estimates in our dataset do reflect these personnel. Looking at the ratio of ground troops deployed to the total size of the military, the pattern is similar. This ratio was highest during World War I at over 80 percent, followed by World War II at about 56 percent. During the Cold War, it remained fairly steady at about 15 percent, with a brief spike during the Korean and Vietnam Wars to about 30 percent each case. In the immediate post–Cold War period this ratio fell to about five percent before rising to almost 30 percent in 2006. Since then, however, the ratio has fallen steadily to only about 5 percent in 2014.

Trends in Location

Another way to consider trends in U.S. military interventions is to look at the regions in which the United States has been most active over time. Figures 2.3a and 2.3b show the number of troops deployed in ground interventions over the period 1898 to 2015. U.S. troops have been concentrated in four main regions. First, the United States had a consistent involvement in Central America from 1898 through the mid-1990s. Although this presence did not involve a large number of troops, it did constitute a prolonged and lasting component of U.S. overseas presence. In terms of numbers, U.S. interventions have been more significant in Europe and East/Southeast Asia. These two regions contain the United States' closest allies, so it is expected that these

Figure 2.3a
Number of Troops Involved in U.S. Interventions, by Region and Year (Truncated)
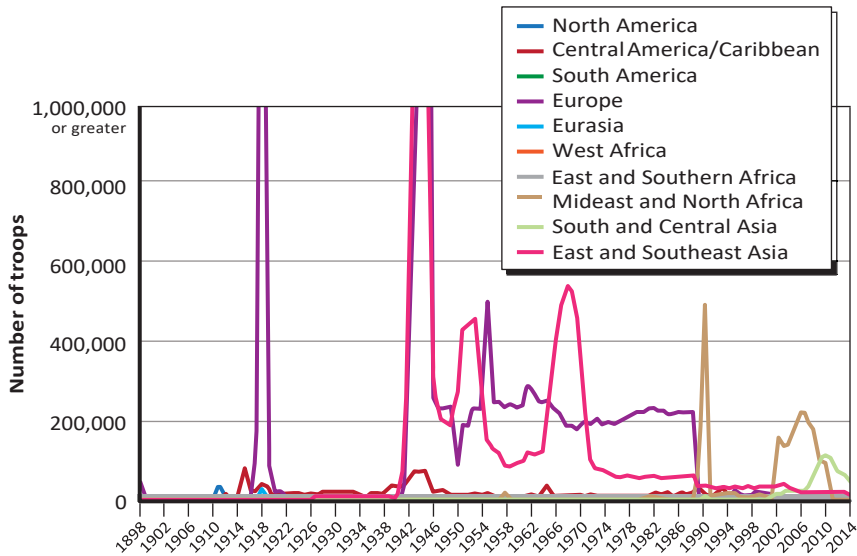
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-2.3a*

Figure 2.3b
Number of Troops Involved in U.S. Interventions, by Region and Year
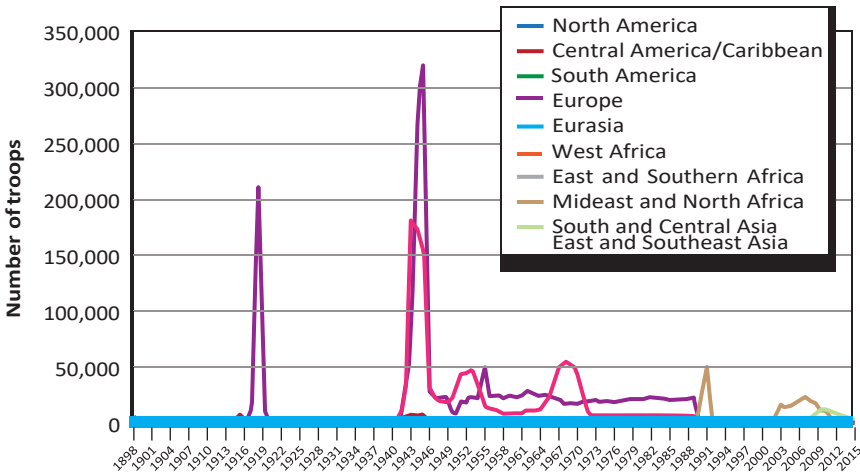
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-2.3b*

regions would also be home to the majority of the most sizable U.S. military interventions. Notably, however, the number of U.S. troops involved in active military interventions in both Europe and East/ Southeast Asia has declined since the end of the Cold War. In part, the drop in the number of troops in these regions reflects a coding decision made for the RUGID data: we coded deterrent interventions against the Soviet Union as terminating with the end of the Cold War, and remaining troops were classified as "forward presence," an activity we did not include in our database. However, the shift also reflects a real change in U.S. military strategy and priorities away from prior deterrence missions and a substantial drawdown of troops from Europe. While the U.S. commitment to key allies in Europe and East Asia remains strong, the United States has also been establishing military ties and expanding military involvement in other regions as well.

Starting in about 1990, the United States has also been heavily involved in the Middle East. It is worth noting that despite the common perception that the United States has always been involved militarily in the Middle East, large scale U.S. involvement really only began about 25 years ago. However, between 2003 and 2012 the number of U.S. troops involved in operations in the Middle East grew substantially due to U.S. operations in Iraq. Involvement in South Asia has also increased markedly in recent years, driven by the war in Afghanistan. Notably, U.S. involvement in other regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa and Eurasia has historically been low and has remained low even as the United States has begun to diversify the locations of its military interventions. That said, it is also the case that there are now a handful of small military activities going on in parts of Africa that could signal the beginning of a growing willingness to intervene in this region.

Trends in Duration and Size

Two other characteristics of interest to the Army are the size and duration of military interventions. These characteristics are important because they typically determine the degree of stress a given intervention places on military personnel. While short and small interventions place limited strain on Army manpower, large and enduring ones create a much more significant burden. In this discussion we focus on

Table 2.2
Number of Cases by Primary Intervention Type

Intervention Type	Number of Cases
COIN	2
Combat	14
Deterrence	19
Stability Operations	25

SOURCE: RUGID.

the four types of interventions that have been most common and have involved the greatest number of U.S. troops over the 1898 to 2015 period: combat COIN, stability operations, and deterrence.[5] Table 2.2 shows the number of interventions with these activities as their primary activity type within our dataset.

A first key observation has to do with intervention size. We found that slightly less than one-half of COIN, stability operations, and deterrent interventions (combined) involve more than 20,000 troops at their maximum, while over 70 percent of combat interventions reach this size. Figure 2.4 shows the percentage of each intervention type that reaches the 20,000 troop level. Note that we combine COIN and stability operations here because there are only two interventions in our dataset with COIN as a primary intervention type and both have stability operations as their secondary type. Deterrence interventions appear to be the least likely to be large: only about 42 percent of these interventions have 20,000 troops at their maximum.

Figure 2.5 shows the percentage of interventions in each activity type that have lasted longer than three years. We chose three years as the cutoff for this analysis based on the Army's use of a 1:2 rotation rate during periods of high Operational Tempo (OPTEMPO). At a 1:2 rotation ratio, personnel spend one year deployed and then two years at home, for a total of three years. Any deployment that is longer than three years forces personnel to begin deploying for a second time,

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[5] For this analysis, we used only the primary intervention type of each intervention.

Figure 2.4
Percentage of Different Types of Interventions with More Than 20,000 Troops
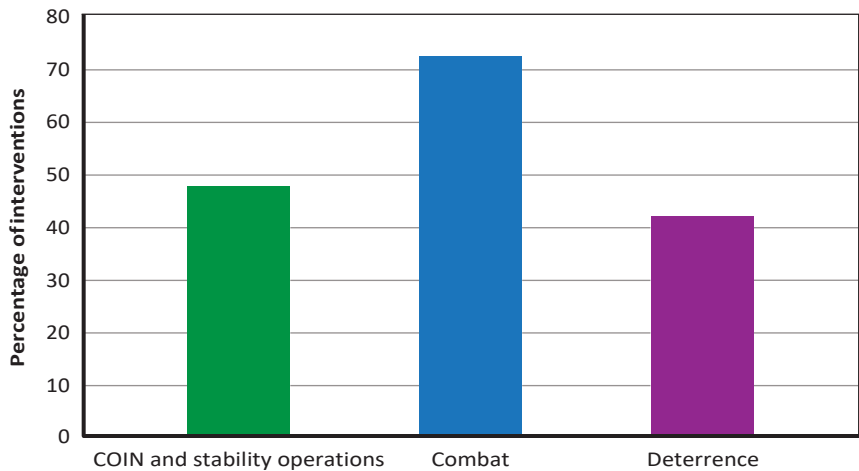
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Figure 2.5
Percentage of Interventions Longer Than 3 Years
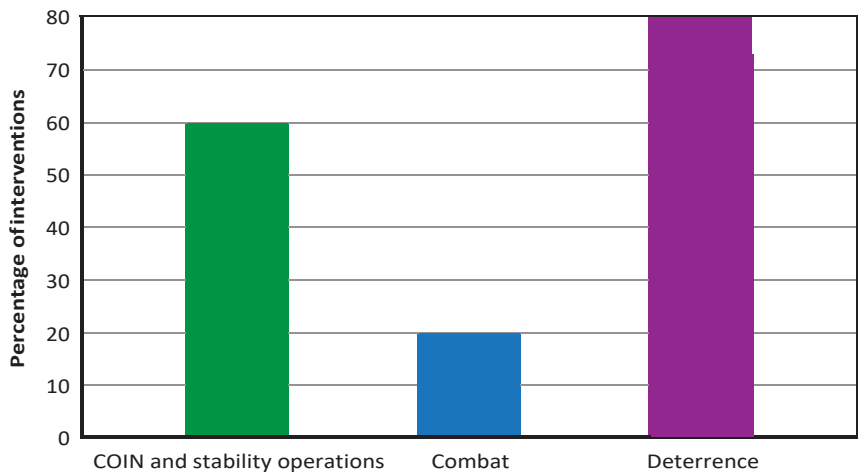
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

increasing the manpower and equipment stress of the intervention on the overall force. Deterrent interventions and COIN/stability operations are significantly more likely to last longer than three years than are combat interventions.[6] Combining this with the figure above, then, combat interventions are significantly more likely to be large (greater than 20,000 troops) but are also least likely to endure longer than three years. COIN, stability operations, and deterrent interventions are less likely to be large, but more likely to last longer than three years.

However, to fully understand the different types of strain created by different types of interventions, we need to look more closely at the specific durations of large interventions in each case. Figure 2.6 illustrates the length, in years, of each intervention with greater than 20,000 troops. There are a number of observations that emerge from this figure. First, with the exception of Vietnam, which lasted 13 years (and which some would argue was equally a COIN intervention), large combat interventions are short, in most cases lasting three years or less. However, large deterrent and COIN/stability operations interventions tend to be longer than three years, often significantly longer. It is not uncommon for large deterrent interventions to last upwards of 30 years. COIN/stability operations have not, in the past, reached this duration, but have lasted longer than 10 years in several cases and over five in many. Notably, both of the COIN interventions (Iraq and Afghanistan) have been large and lengthy, nine and 15 years (and ongoing), respectively. While it is difficult to draw conclusions directly from two observations, it seems that COIN interventions may even tend to be longer and larger than the majority of stability operations.

Pulling these three graphs together suggests that different types of interventions place different kinds of stress on the Army. For deterrence and COIN/stability operations, the strain may be less from the number of personnel required at once and more due to the length of time for which an elevated OPTEMPO must be maintained. These interventions tend to be longer than combat operations, but also are less

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[6]   We use three years because with a 1:2 rotation rate, typical during high deployment periods, military personnel will deploy for one year and be home for two years, for a total three-year cycle. Any deployment longer than three years will require a second deployment cycle.

Figure 2.6
Duration of Large Interventions
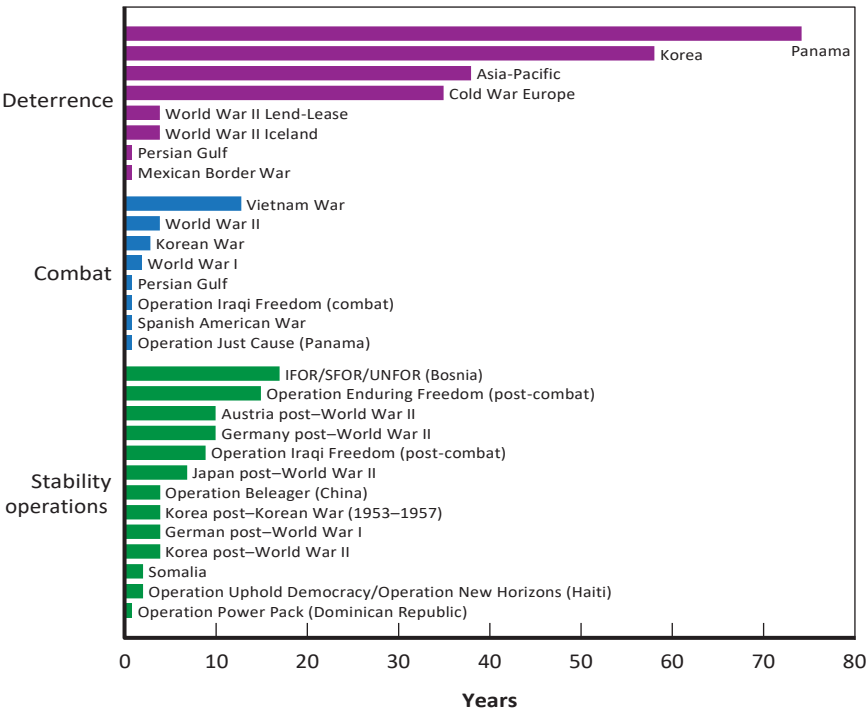
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

likely to involve more than 20,000 troops. That said, the largest stability operations are often significant in size, reaching maximum troops levels of over 100,000 troops. There is also an important distinction to be made between COIN/stability operations and many deterrent interventions. While deterrent interventions often involved personnel on three-year tours, most stability operations involve rotational presence. This means that the number of personnel to maintain the operation over a long time period is much greater than the number actually deployed at any one point. The high OPTEMPO needed to maintain these interventions is yet another source of stress placed on the Army, as it can disrupt training timelines. Unlike stability operations, COIN,

and deterrent interventions, combat interventions are more likely to be large, but tend to be short. This means that while the demands may be more intense at any one time, the stress may be short lived. Planners can also learn from these historical trends to better prepare for future interventions. If combat interventions appear to be looming, having the ability to rapidly surge a large number of personnel is essential, but the sustainability of this surge may be less important. However, if deterrent or stability operations are anticipated, then having a deep force, one that is both large enough and adequately trained and resourced to sustain itself through multiple deployments, may be a more appropriate focus.

Analysis of Unit Types in U.S. Ground Interventions

As noted above, in addition to collecting data on the number of interventions, we also collected information on the specific units involved in each intervention, both Army and Marine Corps. This data is useful in identifying trends in the most and least used types of units, highlighting relationships between intervention activity and unit types used, and looking for cases of mismatch between the apparent demand for and use of specific types of units. We focus our analysis here on the use of Army units. However, similar analysis could also be conducted using the unit type data we collected on the USMC.

Trends in Unit Type Use

Figure 2.7 shows the percentage of interventions involving each of our eight unit-type categories and reveals some striking observations. First, the most commonly used unit type is sustainment. This is not surprising given that functions such as transport and supply are crucial to all interventions. However, it is notable that the second most commonly used types of units are those involving engineers. This underscores the important role that engineering skills play in ground interventions across activity types. Combat and combat support is involved in about 67 percent of the interventions in the RUGID data. It is significant that they are used equally frequently since this suggests that they may

Figure 2.7
Most Commonly Used Unit Types
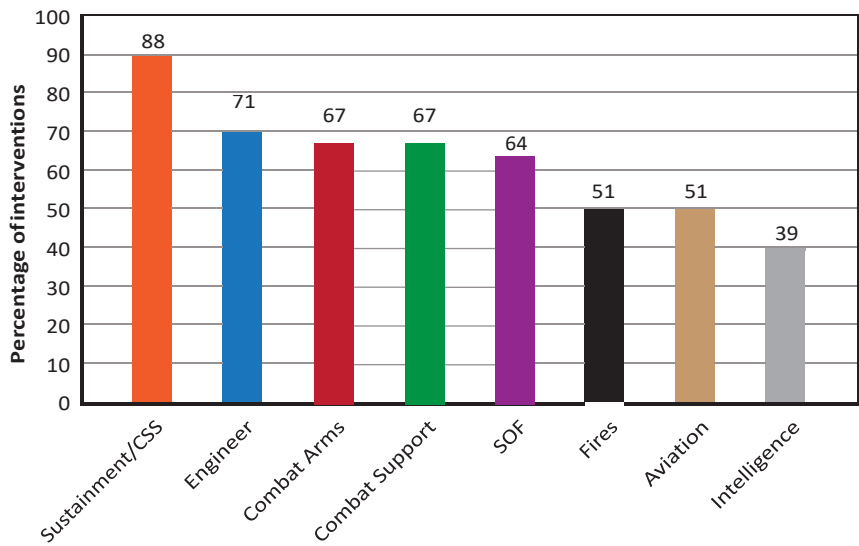
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

in fact be used and deployed together in most cases. In fact, there are no cases where combat arms units deploy without at least one type of non-combat arms unit to support it. This may have implications for manning and for estimating the personnel requirements of a given intervention. Specifically, when estimating the force needs of a particular intervention, planners and those resourcing the intervention (e.g., Congress) must carefully consider both the need for forward deployed combat arms troops and the perhaps even more sizable demand for support personnel.

Also significant is the high number of interventions that involve Special Operations Forces (SOF), including civil affairs and PSYOP. As will be described in more detail below, our unit type data suggest a growing use of SOF units in a variety of roles in ground interventions. Fires, aviation, and intelligence units are less used than others. This

may be because their functionality is fairly specialized and best suited to specific types of interventions.

Over time, the most and least used types of units have changed as the nature of U.S. military interventions have evolved. In this section, we highlight some of the key trends in unit type use over the period from 1898 to 2014. Appendix C includes additional figures that show the trends in use over time for each of our unit types.

- **Combat Arms:** The demand for combat arms forces has remained high and fairly constant over time, even as the number of conventional wars has declined. Notably, however, there does seem to have been a slight decline in the past six years. Overall, however, the trends illustrated here suggest that combat arms troops, including light and mechanized infantry, continue to serve important functions for the military.
- **Combat Support and Sustainment:** The demand for combat support and sustainment troops has remained fairly high and constant over time. Notably, trends in the use of combat support and combat arms troops are similar, implying that the two sets of units often deploy together. Demand for sustainment units has remained high throughout the time period under consideration. This makes sense as the functions provided by sustainment units are crucial for all types of interventions.
- **Fires:** Use of fires units has declined more substantially in recent years, as the interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan have become less active. The decline in the use of fires units may also reflect a shift in the nature of conflict and in the types of operations conducted by the U.S. military. As the military conducts fewer conventional combat operations and more nontraditional training, assistance, and stability operations, the use of traditional fires units may also decline.
- **Special Operations Forces:** The reliance on special operations units has increased dramatically over time as they have become more involved in all types of missions, ranging from train-and-assist, to security cooperation, to COIN, and to peacekeeping and humanitarian activities. This is a particularly important trend

when viewed in concert with the slight decline in the use of combat arms troops, as it suggests a change in the way ground operations are conducted and may have implications for training and manning decisions as well.

- **Aviation:** The use of aviation units in ground interventions has also increased fairly substantially since its levels during World War I, but has declined since reaching peaks during World War II and again in the 1990s. Use of aviation forces has declined rather substantially since about 2009. While this does seem to suggest that perhaps aviation units are playing a less central role in today's interventions, it is also the case that anecdotally, when aviation units have been used, they are often vitally important to mission completion.
- **Intelligence:** As a percentage of all interventions, intelligence units are somewhat less used than other types of units, such as combat arms and combat support. This may be because intelligence units tend to play a specialized role in military interventions and because many units have embedded intelligence capabilities.
- **Engineer:** Throughout the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and until about 2009, engineering units were involved in about 70–80 percent of interventions in any given year. This has changed, more recently, and in ongoing interventions since about 2009, engineer unit involvement has fallen closer to 50 percent. This may reflect a shift in the types of operations the Army has more recently been conducting or a shift in U.S. force structure due to the use contractors and civilians.

Relationship Between Unit Type and Activity

We also considered whether the specific types of units used varied by activity type and found some important differences. Figure 2.8 illustrates the use of each unit type by type of primary activity for the intervention.

- For advisory interventions, the two most commonly used types of units are SOF and sustainment. This is not surprising: SOF units may be more valuable and involved in advisory-type duties

Figure 2.8
Use of Unit Types by Primary Intervention Activity
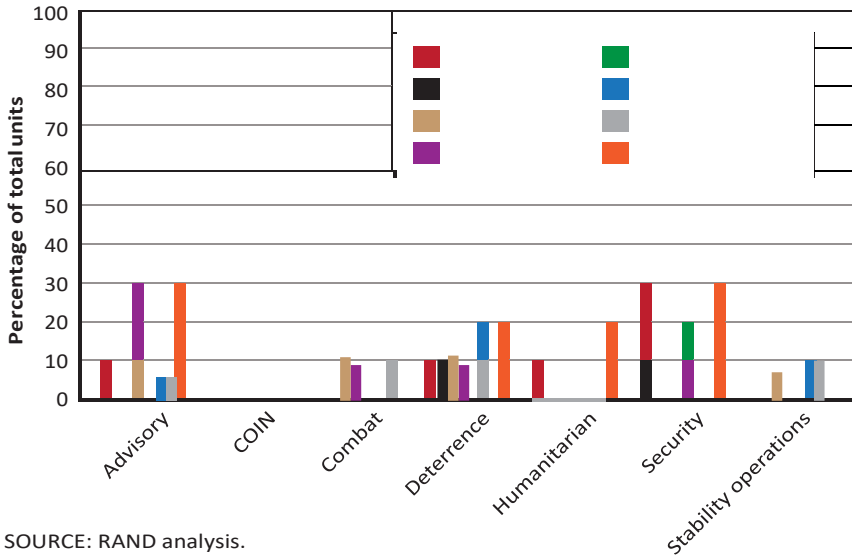
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
RAND *RR1831A-2.8*

than combat arms troops and the support provided by sustainment units may also be vitally important. Fires are the least used type of unit, but engineer, combat support, and intelligence are similarly less used for these types of interventions.

- COIN, combat, and stability operation interventions appear to involve all unit types in a fairly equal distribution, although SOF units are used slightly less than combat arms and fires personnel in the case of conventional combat. It seems that resourcing and completing combat and COIN is a task that falls across unit types and places stress on the entire force, not only combat arms units.
- Deterrence interventions also make use of all unit types, but the distributions are somewhat less even. Engineers, combat arms, and sustainment appear to be used relatively more and intelligence and SOF forces somewhat less.
- Humanitarian interventions are dominated by engineers and aviation units, which makes sense given the nature of the tasks

involved. Fires and intelligence are rarely used for these inter-
ventions.

- Security interventions have the highest predominance of combat
  arms units of any of the seven intervention types, followed by sus-
  tainment and combat support units. Intelligence units were not
  used in any of the security interventions included in our data set
  (at least according to the data that we reviewed), nor were avia-
  tion units a part of these interventions. While this is notable, it is
  also worth mentioning that many security interventions occurred
  relatively early in the century when that Army structure was very
  different and aviation was a less significant part of military opera-
  tions overall. That combat arms troops play such a large role in
  security interventions (which typically involve guarding assets or
  civilians) demonstrates the versatility of combat arms forces and
  the contributions they make to interventions outside of those that
  are strictly focused on conventional combat.

Relationship Between Unit Type and Intervention Size

Finally, we explored our data for any patterns in unit type use by the
size of the intervention. We found that there were few major differences
in the distribution of unit type use by size of intervention. Instead, it
seems that all units are represented more or less equally in interventions
across the range of different sizes.

However, there are differences in the number of units involved in
interventions of different sizes.[7] Figure 2.9 shows the number of unit
types involved in all interventions, irrespective of size. The figure shows
that most interventions have at least five types (considering the broad
categories of unit types, combat arms, combat support, Special Opera-
tions Forces, etc.) of units and as many as 25 percent involve eight dif-
ferent unit types. This underscores the point made elsewhere that most
interventions require a mix of different types of forces, rather than rely-
ing only on one to two unit types.

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[7] As a reminder, according to the coding framework used in this report, small interventions
involve 100 to 500, medium interventions involve 500 to 20,000, and large interventions
involve more than 20,000 troops at their peak.

Figure 2.9
Total Number of Unit Types in Ground Interventions
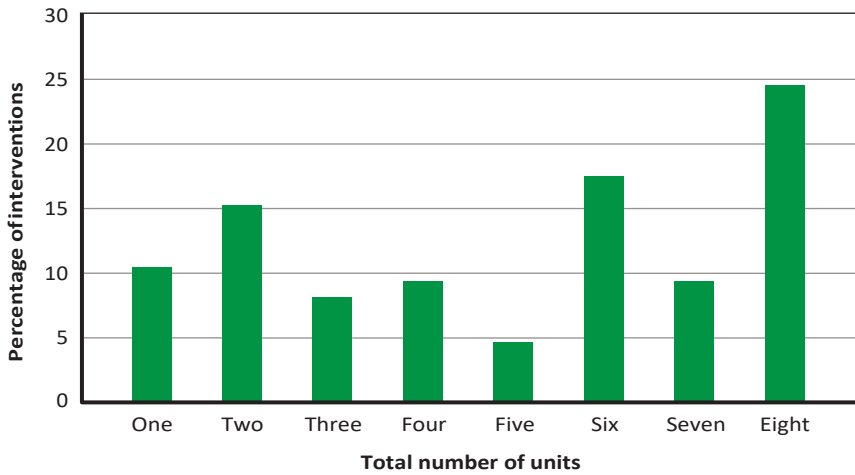
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-2.9*

Figure 2.10
Total Number of Unit Types in Small Ground Interventions
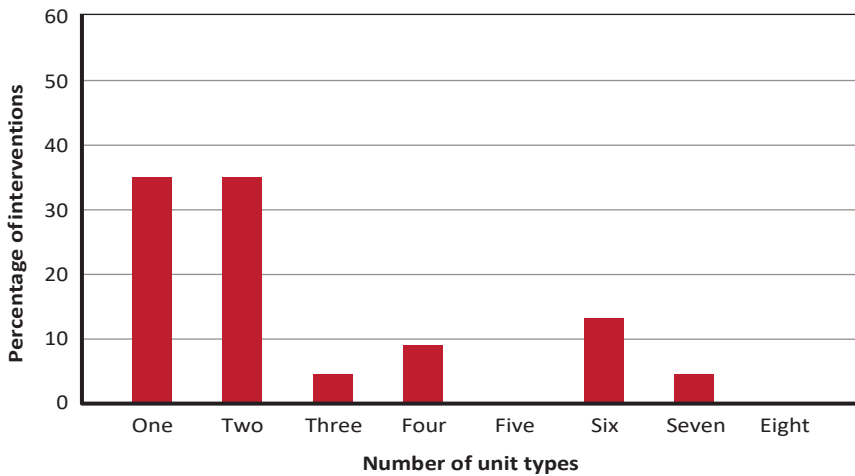
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-2.10*

Figure 2.11
Total Number of Unit Types in Medium Ground Interventions
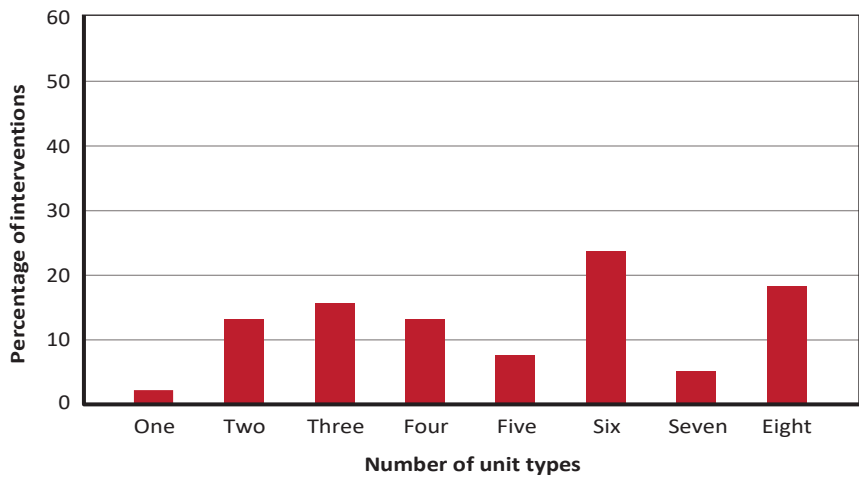
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Figure 2.12
Total Number of Unit Types in Large Ground Interventions
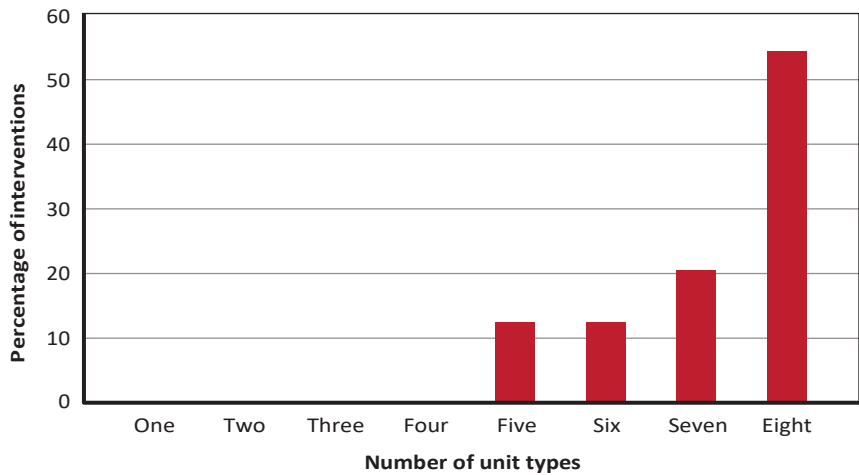
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Figures 2.10 through 2.12 show the number of different unit types involved in small, medium, and large interventions, respectively. As expected, there are some significant differences by intervention size. For small interventions, about 70 percent involve only one or two unit types. For large interventions, those over 20,000 troops, no interventions use fewer than five unit types, and about 75 percent use seven or eight. Medium interventions are more evenly distributed in terms of unit type use. About half use more than five unit types and about five use fewer than five.

Unit Type Mismatches and Shortages

One of the important objectives of this report is to identify ways in which ground interventions stress Army resources and insights that can be applied to reduce and prepare for these stresses. As we collected the data on unit type, we came across instances where a unit trained for one activity was asked to complete a different task, often because of a mismatch between the types of personnel deployed and the demands of the intervention. Based on our analysis, this mismatch can have a number of different causes. These include resource constraints that affect the total number of people available, lack of personnel in required specialties, and unanticipated shifts in the demand of the mission. But regardless of why it occurs, these types of misalignments and cross-use of personnel place stress on the Army as a whole and the personnel individually. While it is difficult to measure this mismatch quantitatively, it is possible to qualitatively explore the frequency with which this cross-use of units happens and what the broader implications are for mission completion.

Our first example comes from the U.S. occupation of Korea at the end of World War II. In this instance, the rapid shift in the nature of the mission objectives resulted in a mismatch between unit type and the demands placed on U.S. personnel. U.S. troops allocated for the occupation of South Korea following the surrender of Japan had to quickly reorient themselves from combat operations against Japanese forces to occupation and governance duties. The 40th infantry division, for example, received only a week's notice that they would be heading to South Korea as part of the occupation. Accordingly, there

was a significant shortage of specific unit types—civil affairs and Military Police—necessary for such an operation. "The Divisions under the corps knew that trained military government teams would not be available until approximately six weeks after the start of the operation. In order to fill the gap, the division took teams out of combat formations and provided hasty training on their expected duties and responsibilities."[8] Infantrymen with potentially useful skills for civil affairs and military governance were selected from these teams. To rectify a deficit in military policemen, artillery and air defense troops were used to create MP battalions, this "change was in name only as the parent units had only two weeks to train the troops to conduct the law enforcement tasks."[9]

The opposite challenge—a shift from peacekeeping activities to heavy combat—placed similar strains on Army personnel during Operation Continuing Hope, when the United States provided support to the U.N. mission to Somalia. While the intervention began as a stability operation, over time U.S. troops became involved in heavy combat operations and began to take significant losses in part because the units deployed were not prepared or equipped to conduct these types of operations. In response, commanders submitted multiple requests for heavier, better protected units such as armored and mechanized formations. These were initially declined, but after further U.S. casualties demonstrated the need for this capability, they were sent to Somalia.[10]

In the case of the U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003, the issue was not just a shortage of the right types of personnel but also a mismatch of available personnel to mission demands. While combat arms units were asked to conduct security and patrolling tasks, among others, that were outside of their typical purview, troops not trained to conduct active COIN operations were sometimes called to fill these roles. On the

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[8]   Matthew D. Shifrin, *Penciled into History: The U.S. Army's Occupation of Korea and Lessons for the Operational Artist*, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, 2014, p.14.

[9] Ibid., p. 15.

[10]   United States Forces, Somalia, *After Action Report and Historical Overview: The United States Army in Somalia, 1992–1994*, Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 2003, pp. 106–107.

one hand, personnel across specialties were asked to conduct scouting, patrolling, convoying, and screening tasks for which they were under-prepared and under-resourced. On the other, personnel not part of traditional combat arms specialties were asked to conduct combat missions. Specifically, to address the demands of the intervention "Marines, soldiers and sailors used rifles, grenades, and explosives to confront insurgents at close quarters to eliminate their hold over the population. Such work did not always fall to the lot of the infantrymen, who remained sorely under strength for the distances and scope of the assignments."[11] This mismatch, therefore, placed stress on personnel across specialties.

Similar mismatches and shortages between the civil affairs and PSYOP personnel who were in high demand and the combat troops that deployed to support the mission created strain on the forces deployed in support of Operation Power Pack in the Dominican Republic in 1965 and in Somalia in 1992. The operations in the Dominican Republic were focused primarily "in the political-economic-sociological fields," demanding a robust Civil Affairs and PSYOP presence. Though there were some civil affairs and PSYOP elements deployed in support of Operation Power Pack, they were too few in number to effectively carry out their missions. Friction with other U.S. agencies and the lack of a permanent staff led to critical tasks—such as countering rebel propaganda and distributing humanitarian relief—being unfulfilled.[12]

Another mismatch example emerges from the relief operation performed to assist Haitian and Cuban refugees as part of Operations Sea Signal, Safe Haven, and Safe Passage. After a number of riots in Cuban refugee camps located in Panama, U.S. forces adopted a more aggressive posture, deploying additional units and adopting more permissive rules of engagement. As part of this posture, M113 Armored Personnel Carriers from an engineer battalion were used to keep order in the

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[11] Kenneth W. Estes, *Into the Fray: U.S. Marines in Iraq, 2004–2005*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Marine Corps History Division, 2011, p. 150.

[12] Jack K. Ringler and Henry I. Shaw Jr., *U.S. Marine Corps Operations in the Dominican Republic, April–June 1965*, Washington, D.C.: Historical Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1970, p. 53.

camp, having a significant impact on the refugees' behavior.[13] Infantry units deployed to quell the camp riots had little training or time to prepare for the civil disturbance missions required in the operation. They deployed as if heading into combat, with too much unessential gear. Because of lack of training and proper equipment, initial attempts to subdue the rioters were unsuccessful.[14]

This discussion suggests that the mismatches between demands and units, shortages of high demand personnel, and instances where units are asked to perform tasks outside their traditional domain are fairly common during ground interventions, particularly some of the larger ones, and do have implications for force readiness and mission completion. The most common mismatches appear to be cases where combat arms units are asked to complete nontraditional tasks such as security, peace maintenance, patrolling, or scouting and those where non-combat arms troops (e.g., those trained for security, transport, or other tasks) being asked to conduct heavy combat operations. A second common theme that seems to emerge from this discussion is that often times, it is the civil affairs and PSYOP units that are both in the highest demand and in the shortest supply.

Summary: Which Units Are Most Stressed?

Our presentation of unit type data suggests several overarching observations about trends in unit type demand and supply. First, as noted above, combat arms, combat support, and sustainment units are heavily used across intervention type. Even as U.S. ground interventions involve an increasing number of nontraditional tasks, these more traditional unit types remain essential parts of the force. This is an important observation that may inform future Army training, recruiting, and equipment investments decisions. Second, use of Special Operations Forces units has been increasingly common across intervention types. This may reflect a different approach to operations by the U.S.

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[13] Robert N. Neske, *The Assumption of Adequacy: Operation Safe Haven; A Chaplain's View*, thesis, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1999, p. 39.

[14] Santiago Rodriguez III, *Camp Riots During Operation Safe Haven, 7–8 December 1994*, Fort Benning, Ga.: USA Infantry School Library, May 27, 1997, pp. 9–10.

military, an increase in advisory, train-and-assist, and other nonconventional units, and a different philosophy on the use of Special Operations Forces. Much has been made of Obama's increased use of Special Operations Forces in place of large ground forces, in the Middle East and in Africa, and this pattern appears to fit well with the trend noted in our data. Third, our trend analysis also revealed that engineering units are involved in a large percentage of interventions, while aviation and intelligence units have historically been used more sparingly. This is not surprising, as engineering forces may be required for any number of different types of tasks across interventions, including supporting facilities to house U.S. forces, construction as part of stability operations, and others. Aviation and intelligence units, however, may be more specialized. Finally, our discussion illustrates that instances where the supply and demand for specific types of units do not match are common. These mismatches and shortages place stress on personnel both within the under-supplied unit types and in other units that are asked to fill in and perform tasks for which they are not trained. In some cases these mismatches result because the demands of the intervention shift suddenly or are different than expected. Both combat arms units and non-combat units are affected by these pressures. We will discuss this issue of mismatches in more detail in the context of our case studies in Appendix B and also in Chapter Five.

Has the United States Intervened in the Past?

In addition to the trends above, our historical analysis also identifies the contexts in which the United States is most likely to launch an intervention. Understanding the types of situations in which the United States is likely to intervene may be important and valuable if it helps planners to anticipate where and when interventions are most likely to occur. We identified three key sets of circumstances in which the United States is most likely to intervene: into armed conflicts; to conduct stability operations in a conflict or post-conflict environment; and to deter rivals and protect allies. In the remainder of this report, we will delve more deeply into these three sets of interventions, con-

sidering factors that make the United States more and less likely to intervene in each case, identifying early warning signs that may allow Army planners to anticipate coming interventions before they occur, and exploring possible future trends in each intervention. However, before turning to these tasks, we first discuss these three types of interventions (armed conflict, stability operations, and deterrence) and provide a typology of U.S. interventions (based on historical patterns) to describe the types of situations (countries, conflicts, and contexts) in which the United States is most likely to intervene.

Interventions into Armed Conflict

Fifty of the interventions in our dataset involve an intervention into ongoing armed conflict. These interventions include advisory, conventional combat, stability operations, deterrence, COIN, and even security interventions. Figure 2.13 illustrates both the trend in total countries at

Figure 2.13
U.S. Ground Interventions in Countries at War, 1900–2014
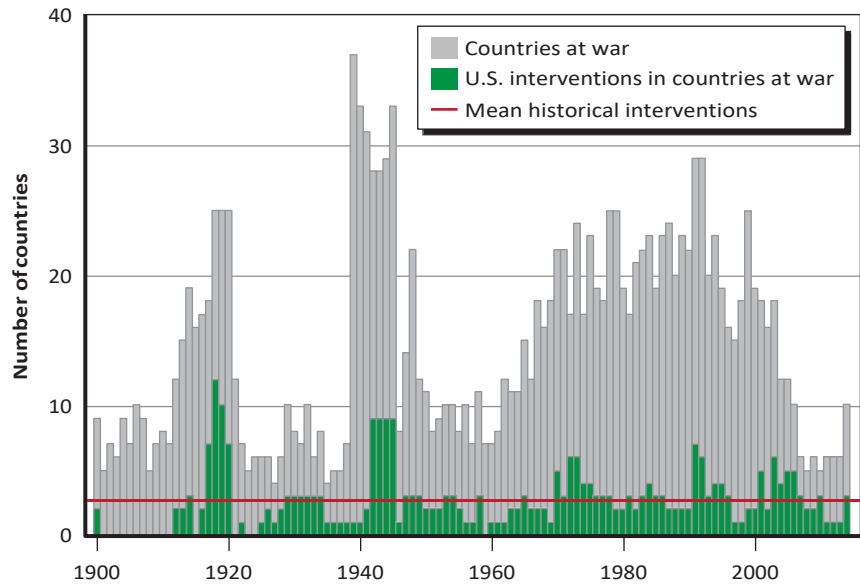
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND RR1831A-2.13

war since 1900 and in the number of countries with U.S. interventions over this same time period. Historically, the United States has intervened in about twenty percent of all armed conflicts. This percentage has fluctuated relatively significantly over time, reaching a high of 50 percent in 2006 and declining afterward.

We identified four "types" of interventions into armed conflict. Table 2.3 provides a summary of these four types, their size, activities, and some examples.

- First, we separated World War I and World War II into their own category because they are qualitatively and quantitatively different than other interventions into armed conflict. These interventions involve conventional combat and troop sizes of over one million. They are also unique in the geographic dispersion of U.S. troops, involving many different countries as the conflict itself spread across numerous borders.
- The second type of intervention into armed conflict that emerges from our historical analysis involves U.S. combat and COIN operations into large inter- and intrastate conflicts. These interventions (about 26 percent of all country years involving U.S. interventions into armed conflict) range in size from about 1,000 troops to 10,000 troops, but can be significantly larger. These interventions typically occur into non-allies in early stages of the conflict. Examples include the intervention into the Korean War in 1950 and in Afghanistan in 2001. It is worth noting that some of our largest interventions into armed conflict fall into this category, despite the fact that they often occur into non-allies.
- The third common type of U.S. intervention into armed conflict (about 15 percent of all country years with a U.S. intervention) involves security operations into armed conflicts. In these interventions, U.S. forces typically have indirect involvement in non-allies. U.S. responsibilities typically include protecting civilians and state or U.S. assets and involve, on average, between 1,000 and 10,000 troops. Examples include the U.S. intervention in Lebanon in 1982 and the intervention into the Chinese Civil War in 1945.

Table 2.3
A Typology of U.S. Interventions

	Armed Conflict	Stability Operations	Deterrence
Large	**World Wars** • Size: ~100,000+ • E.g., World War I, World War II • Unique in scale and nature of U.S. involvement	**Postwar Nation Building** • Size: ~100,000+ • E.g., Japan 1940s, Kuwait 1991 • Postwar rebuilding in countries with higher development	**Strong Partners w/ Major Threat** • Size: ~10,000–100,000+ • E.g., Korea, West Germany • Response to territorial claim or other serious threat
	Large Wars & Conflicts • Size: ~1,000–10,000 • E.g., Korea 1950, Afghanistan 2001 • Combat/COIN activities in non-allies, occur early in conflict	**Nation Building & Regime Change** • Size: ~10,000–100,000+ • E.g., Haiti 1990s, Iraq 2000s • Nation-building post-regime change in low-development countries	**Strong Partners w/ Medium Threat** • Size: ~100–10,000 • E.g., Belgium or UK in Cold War • Response to territorial claim or other serious threat
	Security Operations in Armed Conflicts • Size: ~1,000–10,000 troops • E.g., Lebanon 1982, China 1945 • Indirect involvement in non-allies to protect civilians, assets	**Humanitarian & Refugee Relief** • Size: ~1,000–50,000 • E.g., Bosnia 1995, Somalia 1992 • Humanitarian response to high refugee flows as part of coalition	**Weak Partners w/ Any Threat** • Size: ~100–10,000 • E.g., Honduras 1983, Taiwan 1951 • Response to all threats; Size rises with tie to U.S. and threat
Small	**Smaller Intrastate Conflicts** • Size: ~100–10,000 • E.g., Greece 1947, Colombia 1999 • Advisory or deterrent activities in civil wars involving partners	**U.S. as Regional Hegemon** • Size: ~100–5,000 • E.g., Sinai 1982, Lebanon 1958 • U.S. acting as "regional arbiter" in areas of strategic importance	**Non-allies Against Strategic Threat** • Size: ~100–1,000 • E.g., Iran 1953, Libya 1957 • Response to geo-strategic threat in low develop., nondemocracies

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

- Finally, the most common type of U.S. intervention into armed conflict also tends to be the smallest, typically involving 100 to 1,000 troops conducting advisory or deterrent activities in small intrastate conflicts in partner nations. This type of intervention into armed conflict includes almost 50 percent of country years with U.S. interventions in armed conflict. Examples include the U.S. intervention in Colombia in 1999 and in Greece in 1947. It is notable that almost half of interventions into armed conflict do not involve combat as a primary activity type and are typically relatively small. However, it is also significant that such a sizable percentage of total armed conflicts end up involving the United States as a third-party intervener.

Stability Operations

Stability operations may include peacekeeping, nation building, and other law and order focused tasks. We include as stability operations any intervention coded as such in our dataset. These include primarily interventions into conflict or post-conflict situations (within 10 years of the end of the conflict). Our analysis revealed that stability operations interventions typically occur either during an armed conflict or in the 10 years after such a conflict. Thus, there is some overlap between stability operations interventions and interventions into armed conflict. Our dataset involves 33 stability operations interventions. As above, we defined four types of stability operations interventions by analyzing patterns in these 33 interventions. The first two types of stability operations, also the two largest types, involve different types of nation building.

- First, the United States has historically conducted a number of postwar nation building interventions in countries with a relatively high initial level of development, for example Kuwait in 1991 and Japan in the 1940s. The higher starting level of development makes the nation-building task somewhat easier for military personnel, but these interventions still typically involve over 100,000 troops. This type of stability operation involves about 17 percent of country years with a U.S. stability operation intervention.

- The second type of nation-building stability operation intervention includes both nation building and regime change in countries with lower levels of development, including Iraq after 2003 and Haiti during the 1990s. These interventions typically involve between 10,000 and over 100,000 troops. This type of stability operation has been somewhat more common and includes about 40 percent of country years with a stability operation intervention. Notably, nation-building interventions, whether they occur in highly developed or undeveloped countries, are typically lengthy and involve a large number of U.S. troops.
- The third common type of stability operations intervention involves humanitarian and refugee relief in response to high refugee flows and often as part of a coalition. These interventions range in typical size from 1,000 to 50,000 troops and involve about 18 percent of country years with U.S. stability operation interventions. Examples include the intervention in Bosnia in 1995 and in Somalia in 1992.
- The final type of U.S. stability operation intervention occurs when the United States acts as a "regional arbiter" in areas of strategic importance, including often the Middle East. Two examples include the U.S. operation in the Sinai and the U.S. intervention in Lebanon in 1958. These interventions tend to be smaller in size, involving 100 to 5,000 troops on average, but they include about 25 percent of country years with a U.S. stability operation.

Nation building and regime change, then, tend to be the most common "type" of stability operation intervention conducted by the United States. Also notable is the fact that this type of stability operation tends to be significant in size and, as noted above, long-lasting. They also often involve a wide range of different activities and place significant demands on military personnel.

Deterrent Interventions

The final circumstance in which the United States most frequently intervenes is in cases where the United States is seeking to deter rivals and protect allies. Deterrent interventions are somewhat less common

than interventions into armed conflict and stability operations, but as noted above, once they do begin, they tend to be very lengthy. Our dataset includes 25 deterrent interventions. Analyzing these 25 interventions revealed four key types:

- The largest deterrent interventions are those that occur into strong partners facing a major threat, including most often a territorial claim or other serious and proximate threat. These interventions range in size from 10,000 to over 100,000, and include about 25 percent of all country years with a deterrent intervention. Thus, this type of intervention is a major driver of the demands deterrent interventions place on the U.S. military. Examples include the deterrent intervention in Korea and that in West Germany during the Cold War.
- The second type of deterrent intervention involves small interventions, ranging in size from 100 to 10,000 into strong partner nations facing a moderate threat. Examples include Belgium and the UK (as well as several other interventions into European allies) during the Cold War.[15] This type of deterrent intervention has been more common than the larger response to a more severe threat, including about 34 percent of country years with a deterrent intervention.
- Equally likely, however, were small interventions into weak partner nations facing any kind of threat. In these instances, the smaller size of the intervention, at 100 to 1,000 troops on average, reveals the lower level of U.S. commitment to these partners than strong allies, and the size of the force appears to vary based on the degree of threat to U.S. interests and the relationship between the United States and the target state. Examples of this type of deterrent intervention include the U.S. intervention in Taiwan in 1951 and in Honduras in 1983.

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[15] We call out Belgium and the UK as two examples that fit both the size and level of threat we are interested in. The United States sent deterrent forces to counter the threat posed by the Warsaw Pact into many European countries. Not all would fall into this category, however, due to their size.

- The least common type of deterrent intervention (about 14 percent of country years with a deterrent intervention) has been small deterrent interventions into non-allies against a strategic threat. The vast majority of these interventions occurred during the Cold War in strategic locations such as Iran in the 1950s and Libya in and around 1957. The targets of these interventions tended to be very different than the strong partners in which the United States typically sends deterrent forces, being low in democracy and development. The deterrent intervention in this case was driven entirely by the larger geostrategic threat posed by the USSR.

Implications

While the past is unlikely to be a perfect predictor of the future, the typologies presented above may still be useful in thinking about the types of situations in which the United States may intervene in the future. Specifically, there are certain scenarios that have prompted a U.S. response in that past that may become more common in the future, and others that are less likely to emerge as drivers of future intervention activity. For example, deterrent interventions into non-allies to deter strategic threats seem to be largely a characteristic of the Cold War and are somewhat less likely to happen with high frequency in the future. However, there are a number of potentially increasing threats to key allies, such as those posed by Russia and China, that could result in an intervention into a partner for the purpose of deterrence similar to those interventions described above. Similarly, nation building in highly developed countries is an activity that the United States has done infrequently and primarily after major interstate wars. It seems likely that the other type of nation building, such as those following regime change in low development countries, are more likely to be a driver of future U.S. interventions. We will return to the task of identifying possible trends in future interventions in subsequent chapters.

Summary and Implications

The historical analysis of when and where the United States has intervened over the past 100 or so years reveals a number of key observations. First, our analysis reveals that COIN, combat, deterrence, and stability operations have been the four most common intervention activities and the activities that have historically involved the most U.S. troops. If present trends continue, these activities are likely to continue to dominate U.S. intervention activity in the future. Conventional combat operations do seem to be growing somewhat less common, but it is far too soon to declare the potential for this type of intervention to be disappearing. This suggests that the Army will need to continue to prepare military personnel to face both conventional and nonconventional threats and demands.

Second, U.S. interventions have been concentrated in a number of key regions, including Europe, East/Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia. Notably, U.S. involvement in Europe and East/Southeast Asia has waned somewhat in terms of numbers from peak levels as a large number of troops have moved into the Middle East and South Asia to support operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. While U.S. forces have not traditionally been much involved in sub-Saharan Africa or Eurasia, it is possible that future realignments may bring more U.S. troops into new regions especially if new threats or regional dynamics emerge.

Third, the unit type analysis highlighted some of the most frequently used unit types in U.S. ground interventions, including sustainment, combat arms, and combat support, as well as revealing the increasingly frequent use of SOF units, including civil affairs and PSYOP. Our discussion of unit types also revealed some variation in the types of units deployed across interventions with different activities (e.g., COIN, stability operations, humanitarian, etc.), but also illustrated that most interventions require many different types of units. Special Operations Forces and sustainment units appear to be the most versatile in their use as they play important roles across intervention types. However, our analysis also highlighted the fact that mismatches between supply and demand in specific types of personnel are common

and affect many different types of occupations, including especially combat arms personnel tasked to conduct humanitarian or peacekeeping activities such as security and patrolling and non-combat arms personnel being tasked to contribute to counterinsurgency and even heavy combat situations, sometimes without necessary training and equipment. This places stress on personnel and compromises readiness, but is sometimes unavoidable, at least in the short term, when the demands of an intervention shift quickly or unexpectedly.

Finally, our analysis revealed that the United States typically intervenes in three key circumstances: interventions into armed conflict, stability operations, and deterrence. We developed a typology that included four common types of interventions that fall into each of these three circumstances. This typology is useful for several reasons. First, it helps characterize the types of situations in which the United States has intervened in the past and the typical characteristics of these interventions. Second, it provides a way to begin thinking about the future of U.S. interventions. Certain situations or circumstances that have traditionally motivated new U.S. interventions may become more likely while others become less likely. For example, stability operations in developed countries are unlikely to be common in the future, but those in low development countries may continue to be common. This may be a guide to U.S. forces trying to prepare more effectively for the future challenges that they may encounter. However, before we can assess what interventions are likely to look like going forward, we need to understand more specifically the factors that have driven them in the past. This will be the focus of our statistical analysis in the next chapter.

Determinants of the Likelihood and Size of Interventions

Providing a summary of historical trends in U.S. ground interventions, as we did in the previous chapter, is a fairly straightforward exercise. Anticipating U.S. military interventions has often been quite difficult. Interventions, even those of substantial size, can often occur with little warning and in locations as diverse as Somalia, Afghanistan, and Germany. Given the diverse set of reasons why the United States undertakes military interventions, a comprehensive model that predicts every future U.S. intervention is likely to continue to elude analysts.

However, a more modest effort that identifies key signposts for different types of U.S. military interventions may still have substantial value. Knowing when and where the likelihood of an intervention is increasing may give Army planners valuable lead time and enable long-term trend analysis that can help inform force-sizing decisions. This chapter outlines how we built statistical models to analyze data on U.S. military interventions and the factors that have historically correlated with them to identify potential signposts for both the likelihood and size of future interventions. Before turning to the statistical models, however, we took a deeper look at our three types of interventions (interventions into armed conflict, stability operations, and deterrence) to develop a typology of U.S. interventions (based on historical patterns) to describe the types of situations (countries, conflicts, and contexts) in which the United States is most likely to intervene. This typology provides a foundation for our statistical models as well as another way to understand trends in U.S. interventions over time.

Existing Literature and Its Shortcomings

Before moving to the substance of our analysis, we use this chapter to discuss the results of existing research, both to provide background and to lay the foundation for our statistical and qualitative analyses.

The literature on where, why, and when the United States initiates ground interventions is extensive, generally arguing that the United States makes cost-benefit calculations before launching a new military intervention.[1] Factoring into these cost-benefit calculations are a broad range of factors that can be divided into several main categories, including: characteristics of the international environment; characteristics of the conflict or crisis in which the United States is intervening; domestic characteristics of the United States; the relationship between the United States and the target state; and characteristics of the target state itself. Evidence from the literature for many of these factors is mixed, often because, as noted above, different analyses use different definitions of what qualifies as an intervention, what types of forces are involved, and the time period under consideration. In this section, we consider the key factors identified in existing literature as driving the initiation, size, and duration of military interventions (both specific to the United States and more generally) and discuss some of the limitations of this existing research.

Characteristics of the International Environment

Characteristics of the international system can play an important role in determining where and when the United States undertakes military deployments and interventions because this international environment shapes U.S. strategic interests and key objectives. For example, several studies, particularly those focusing on Cold War–era interventions, suggest that international strategic factors, such as arms races or threats to U.S. international interests, along with systemic patterns of political instability, the number of ongoing conflicts, and the degree of U.S. hegemony, are most likely to drive intervention and uses of

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[1] Benjamin Miller, "The Logic of US Military Interventions in the Post–Cold War Era," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 19, No. 3, December 1998, pp. 72–109.

military force.[2] This work suggests that the United States is more likely to intervene in areas of strategic interest and when U.S. hegemony is strongest, as this ensures the greatest possible degree of flexibility and the highest possible likelihood of success.[3] The amount of political instability or the number of ongoing conflicts may have two different and possibly countervailing effects on the likelihood of conflict. Some arguments suggest that when there is more instability and more conflict, the United States may be pulled into more interventions. There is little empirical support for this, however.[4] An alternative argument is that greater political instability and more ongoing conflicts may reduce the likelihood of certain types of military interventions, for example deterrence, since Army leaders and policymakers may wish to preserve U.S. manpower for potential combat interventions in response to this heightened risk of conflict. However, there is again very limited empirical support for such a relationship or response. Direct competition between states also appears to be a key issue. Existing work suggests that states in general, and especially the United States, are significantly more likely to intervene in a conflict if a key rival intervenes on behalf of the challenger.[5] Finally, international norms and multinational coalitions may also play a role in determining where and when the United States intervenes. There is some work that suggests that multilateral interventions are perceived as more legitimate and countries (including the United States) may be more likely to join in such interventions than they would be to intervene in other contexts.[6]

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[2] Patrick James and John O'Neal, "The Influence of Domestic and International Politics on the President's Use of Force," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1991, pp. 307–332; H. W. Brands, *Cold Warriors: Eisenhower's Generation and American Foreign Policy*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.

[3] James and O'Neal, 1991; Brands, 1988.

[4] James and O'Neal, 1991; Brands, 1988.

[5] Stephen E. Gent, "Strange Bedfellows: The Strategic Dynamics of Major Power Military Interventions," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 69, No. 4, November 2007, pp. 1089–1102.

[6] Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003.

The dynamics of the international system are also argued to be particularly important in explaining and motivating U.S. military interventions during the Cold War, when the United States often intervened in conflicts to prevent the USSR from exploiting the conflict for its own ends or to prevent a Communist regime from taking power.[7] Yoon found that during the Cold War, the two most common factors driving an intervention by the United States into an ongoing conflict were whether one of the actors in the conflict was a Communist and if the USSR or one of its allies had already intervened. Since the end of the Cold War, these sorts of directly competitive interventions have become less frequent. However, there may be other threats, such as ISIS or a rising China, that serve as systemic motivators for future U.S. interventions.

Characteristics of the Conflict or Crisis

Characteristics of the conflict or crisis that may affect the decision to intervene include the intensity of the conflict, its duration, the identity and strength of key players, the presence of a humanitarian crisis, and the potential that the conflict could spread. However, the empirical findings on several of these dimensions are mixed. For example, there is some work that finds that interventions in prolonged conflicts (in terms of duration) are less likely because of the expected higher costs and the lower probability for success.[8] However, this same work finds a positive relationship between the number of cumulative casualties in a given conflict and the likelihood of intervention.[9] These apparently

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[7]   Mark P. Lagon, "The International System and the Reagan Doctrine: Can Realism Explain Aid to 'Freedom Fighters'?" *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 22, No. 1, January 1992, pp. 39–70; Patrick M. Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention and Civil Conflict*, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 2002; Mi Yung Yoon, "Explaining U.S. Intervention in Third World Internal Wars, 1945–1989," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 41, No. 4, August 1997, pp. 580–602.

[8]   Regan, 2002; Aysegul Aydin, "Where Do States Go? Strategy in Civil War Intervention," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 27, No. 1, February 2010, pp. 47–66.

[9]   Regan, 2002; Nicolas Rost and J. Michael Greig, "Taking Matters into Their Own Hands: An Analysis of the Determinants of State-Conducted Peacekeeping in Civil Wars," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 48, No. 2, March 2011, pp. 171–184.

contradictory findings may reflect the fact that the longest interventions are not always the ones with the most casualties.

The government-rebel balance has also been shown to influence the likelihood of interventions into ongoing armed conflicts. Specifically, interventions by third parties appear more likely when the balance between the government and the rebels is relatively more equal.[10] The number of refugees produced by a conflict or crisis may also affect the likelihood of an intervention. Most work finds a positive relationship between high refugee flows and the likelihood of an intervention.[11] Finally, there is also some anecdotal evidence from case study analysis that interventions into some conflicts are motivated by the fear that without an intervention, the conflict is likely to spread.[12] This research suggests that conflicts that seem more likely to spread, either due to the actors involved or the location may also be more likely to trigger a U.S. intervention.

There is also some existing work on how characteristics of a crisis or threat might influence the decision to conduct deterrence interventions. Many of the arguments and findings from this research parallel those described above. First, deterrent interventions may be more likely when the degree of threat posed by the adversary is severe, especially if the adversary is an important rival of the United States.[13] In some ways, the determination of what qualifies as a severe threat is subjective, but there may be some objective markers, such as arms races or the presence or threat of territorial disputes and claims, which are indicative of a high likelihood of eventual conflict and which may be especially

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[10] Stephen E. Gent, "Going in When It Counts: Military Intervention and the Outcome of Civil Conflicts," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 4, December 2008, pp. 713–735.

[11] Mark J. Mullenbach and Gepard P. Matthews, "Deciding to Intervene: An Analysis of International and Domestic Influences on United States Interventions in Intrastate Disputes," *International Interactions*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2008 pp. 25–52; Rost and Greig, 2011.

[12] H. W. Brands Jr., "Decisions on American Armed Intervention: Lebanon, Dominican Republic, and Grenada," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 102, No. 4, Winter 1987–1988, pp. 607–624; Robert Jervis, "The Future of World Politics: Will It Resemble the Past?" *International Security*, Vol. 16, No. 3, Winter 1991–1992, pp. 39–73; Finnemore 2003.

[13] James and O'Neal, 1991; Brands, 1988; Lagon, 1992; Regan, 2002; Yoon, 1997.

likely to trigger a new military intervention.[14] In the current context, it is easy to see that factors such as the number of refugees, the devastation of the conflict, and other possible interveners affect the willingness of the United States to intervene. Recent debates about the U.S. role in Syria have considered humanitarian concerns as well as the involvement of adversaries such as Russia and Iran.

Domestic Characteristics of the United States

Domestic characteristics of the United States have also been linked with the likelihood of an intervention. One area explored extensively by this work is how the political party in power or the specific presidential administration affects the likelihood of a military intervention. For example, some previous work suggests that the likelihood of military interventions tends to vary across presidential administrations, based on the executive's reputation and stated commitment to taking forceful military action.[15] Under this argument, it is something about the worldview and guiding philosophy of the President that ultimately determines whether or not an intervention occurs. Other arguments focused on the partisan control of the presidency, arguing that the likelihood of a military intervention depends on which political party controls the presidency. However, there is little empirical evidence that presidents on the political left or the political right are more likely than the opposition to launch military interventions.[16] There is, on the other hand, some evidence that partisanship affects the duration of the intervention. Specifically, Koch and Sullivan suggest that as presidential approval ratings decline, governments on the right are more likely to continue fighting and those on the left are more likely to bring the

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[14] Stephen A. Kocs, "Territorial Disputes and Interstate War, 1945–1987," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 57, No. 1, February 1995, pp. 159–175; Paul Huth, *Standing Your Ground: Territorial Disputes and International Conflict*, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 2009.

[15] James Meernik, "Presidential Decision Making and the Political Use of Military Force," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 1, March 1994, pp. 121–138.

[16] Jennifer Kavanagh, *Are U.S. Military Interventions Contagious over Time? Intervention Timing and Its Implications for Force Planning*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-192-A, 2013.

troops home.[17] Finally, some work considers the likelihood of intervention under divided governments as compared to governments where one party controls the Congress and the presidency. This work finds that the United States is more likely to enter multilateral interventions than unilateral ones when there is a divided government, as in these political situations having multilateral burden-sharing makes it easier to win sufficient political support for the intervention.[18]

Domestic public opinion is another characteristic explored as a driver of (or constraint on) U.S. military interventions.[19] The "diversionary war theory" argues that leaders may be more likely to launch a new intervention when they face dire economic conditions or very low popularity, especially in the lead up to an election. In these situations, the theory proposes, leaders use military interventions to distract the public from domestic challenges and to encourage a "rally round the flag" effect that will win them new supporters.[20] However, the empirical support for this theory is mixed, with some work finding that interventions are more likely as presidential approval falls or domestic economic conditions worsen and other work finding that interventions are much more likely in the opposite case, when presidential approval is high and economic conditions are strong.[21]

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[17] Michael T. Koch and Patricia Sullivan, "Should I Stay or Should I Go Now? Partisanship, Approval, and the Duration of Major Power Democratic Military Interventions," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 72, No. 3, July 2010, pp. 616–629.

[18] Atsushi Tago, "Determinants of Multilateralism in US Use of Force: State of Economy, Election Cycle, and Divided Government," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 42, No. 5, September 2005, pp. 585–604.

[19] Jon Western, *Selling Intervention and War: The Presidency, the Media, and the American Public*, Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

[20] Charles W. Ostrom Jr. and Brian L. Job, "The President and the Political Use of Force," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 80, No. 2, June 1986, pp. 541–566; Bradley Lian and John R. Oneal, "Presidents, the Use of Military Force, and Public Opinion," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 37, No. 2, June 1993, pp. 277–300; Brett Ashley Leeds and David R. Davis, "Domestic Political Vulnerability and International Disputes," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 41, No. 6, December 1997, pp. 814–834.

[21] James Meernik, "Domestic Politics and the Political Use of Military Force by the United States," *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 4, December 2001, pp. 889–904; Karl DeRouen Jr. and Jeffrey Peake, "The Dynamics of Diversion: The Domestic Implications

Public attitudes may matter considerably more in pressuring political leaders and influencing their decisions on military interventions when the intervention or prior interventions involve significant U.S. fatalities. Arguments related to "war weariness" suggest that during a long and enduring military deployment with U.S. casualties, the public will gradually tire of the conflict and this effect will endure, reducing the likelihood of subsequent interventions.[22] The archetypal case is that of Vietnam, during which there were high U.S. causalities and an unsatisfactory outcome and following which there were no new interventions for an extended period of time (also sometimes referred to as the Vietnam Syndrome).[23] However, subsequent work has made clear that the negative effect of casualties on support for war and the likelihood of future interventions does not appear to be universal, but instead depends on the objectives and outcomes of the intervention. That work suggests that the public may be more supportive of interventions regardless of casualties when the intervention appears likely to be successful in achieving its objectives (as assessed prior to and during the ongoing military action).[24] The public may also have more favorable attitudes toward interventions that have important implications for U.S. national security or to be aimed at restraining key adversaries (rather than at influencing internal political changes in the interven-

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of Presidential Use of Force," *International Interactions*, Vol. 28, No. 2, 2002, pp. 191–211; Leeds and Davis, 1997; Lian and Oneal, 1993; Ostrom Jr. and Job, 1986.

[22] John Mueller, *Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolesence of Major War*, New York: Basic Books, 1989; Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Vol. 9, New York: Oxford University Press, 1954; Scott S. Gartner and Gary M. Segura, "War, Casualties, and Public Opinion," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 42, No. 3, June 1998, pp. 278–300.

[23] Jeffrey Pickering, "War-Weariness and Cumulative Effects: Victors, Vanquished, and Subsequent Interstate Intervention," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 39, No. 3, May 2002, pp. 313–337.

[24] Ibid.; Mark A. Lorell, Charles T. Kelley, and Deborah R. Hensler, *Casualties, Public Opinion, and Presidential Policy During the Vietnam War*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, R-3060-AF, 1985; Eric V. Larson and Bogdan Savych, *American Public Support for U.S. Military Operations from Mogadishu to Baghdad*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-231-A, 2005; Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver, and Jason Reifler, "Success Matters: Casualty Sensitivity and the War in Iraq," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 3, Winter 2005/2006, pp.7–46.

tion target or affecting the outcomes of civil conflicts).[25] Individuals also tend to be more supportive of interventions that are promoted by the leaders of their "favored" political party.[26] Finally, the public tends to view interventions that have a lower perceived cost more favorably than those that appear likely to have significant costs in terms of money, personnel, or foregone opportunities.[27] In general, while it seems that public attitudes do have some implications for the likelihood of interventions, public support is at best a necessary condition and not on its own sufficient to sway policymaker decisions about the use of military force.[28]

According to existing literature, elite opinion may also play a role in determining where and when the United States intervenes.[29] John Western argues that since powerful elites are often able to leverage their position to advocate for and against military interventions, they may be successful in influencing the final decision to intervene. There is also some evidence that public and elite opinions interact in ways that shape the likelihood of interventions. Specifically, this literature argues that when elite opinions on an intervention diverge, public attitudes also diverge and these diverging opinions may reduce the likelihood of a new intervention. When elites reach some degree of consensus over a military operation, public attitudes converge and the public is widely

[25] Bruce W. Jentleson, "The Pretty Prudent Public: Post Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 1, March 1992, pp. 49–74; Richard C. Eichenberg, "Victory Has Many Friends: U.S. Public Opinion and the Use of Military Force, 1981–2005," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Summer 2005, pp. 140–177; Larson and Savych, 2005; Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler, 2005–2006.

[26] Larson and Savych, 2005; Adam J. Berinsky, "Assuming the Costs of War: Events, Elites, and American Public Support for Military Conflict," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 69, No. 4, November 2007, pp. 975–997.

[27] Patricia L. Sullivan, "Sustaining the Fight: A Cross-Sectional Time-Series Analysis of Public Support for Ongoing Military Interventions," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 2008, pp. 112–135.

[28] For more detail on how public opinion responds to military operations, see Gary C. Jacobson, "A Tale of Two Wars: Public Opinion on the U.S. Military Interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 4, December 2010, pp. 585–610.

[29] Western, 2005.

accepting of the initiation of the new intervention.[30] However, it is important to note that elite opinion is not determinative. Public attitudes and sentiments are certainly flexible and vulnerable to shaping by key elites, but they are not completely controlled by elite actors in the policy or media realms.

Finally, there are military characteristics that may affect the likelihood that the United States intervenes in a given conflict. Military capabilities, both absolute and relative, are one factor that is likely to make a difference in the likelihood of an intervention, according to previous research. For example, countries may be less likely to intervene when they lack the necessary capabilities, either in terms of money or personnel.[31] Some work also suggests that the United States is less likely to intervene in an ongoing conflict when military resources are already committed elsewhere.[32] However, while this has certainly been true, at points (for example during and in the immediate aftermath of Vietnam), the United States has often also intervened in multiple conflicts at the same time. In fact, Kavanagh finds that United States military interventions are likely to form clusters, with multiple interventions occurring at the same time.[33]

In the aftermath of long and costly U.S. interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, there has been hesitancy in the United States among political leaders and a distaste among the public for the initiation of new military interventions. This is supported by much of the literature on "war weariness." However, it is worth noting that the literature suggests that public support for military interventions may depend more on the objectives and perceived importance of the intervention. This suggests that even today there may be certain types of ground interventions that could win public support. Furthermore, it is important that the United States has been able to initiate certain types of interventions in recent years without evoking public backlash, including deterrent

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[30] Berinsky, 2007.

[31] Rost and Greig, 2011.

[32] Paul K. Huth, "Major Power Intervention in International Crises, 1918–1988," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 42, No. 6, December 1998, pp. 744–770.

[33] Kavanagh, 2013.

and training missions. This suggests a possible limitation to the "war weariness" argument.

Characteristics of the Target State

Another set of factors that may affect U.S. intervention decisions is the characteristics of the target state, including factors such as the state's wealth, level of economic development, strength of democracy, or location.[34] For instance, there is a significant body of research that suggests that U.S. military interventions are most likely in regions and countries that have strategic resources and areas where the United States seeks to expand its political or economic influence.[35] Other work finds that more specific elements of geography and location influence the likelihood of an intervention. For example, interventions seem less likely for states that have more neighboring countries or contiguous borders.[36] The proximity of the target to the intervening state may also matter, increasing the likelihood of an intervention.[37] Conversely, characteristics such as oil wealth and level of economic development have been shown to decrease the likelihood of interventions into ongoing conflicts.[38] Notably, this finding on the negative influence of oil production runs counter to the hypothesis that strategic resources may be an intervention driver for the United States. The economic development finding, however, is consistent with our expectations and may have a parallel in military capabilities. Specifically, the United States

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[34]   Amber Aubone, "Explaining US Unilateral Military Intervention in Civil Conflicts: A Review of the Literature," *International Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 2, March 2013, pp. 278–302.

[35]   Yoon, 1997; Frederic S. Pearson and Robert A. Baumann, "Foreign Military Intervention and Changes in United States Business Activity," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1977, pp. 79–97; Michael T. Klare, *Beyond the "Vietnam Syndrome": U.S. Interventionism in the 1980s*, Washington, D.C.: Institute for Policy Studies, 1981.

[36] Regan, 2002.

[37] Yoon, 1997; Michael G. Findley and Tze Kwang Teo, "Rethinking Third-Party Interventions into Civil Wars: An Actor-Centric Approach," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 68, No. 4, November 2006, pp. 828–837; Jacob D. Kathman, "Civil War Contagion and Neighboring Interventions," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 4, December 2010, pp. 989–1012.

[38] Aydin, 2010.

(or another intervener) may be less likely to intervene in states that are better off economically and/or more capable militarily.[39] There may be two explanations for this. First, a more capable ally may be in less need of a U.S. intervention. Second, a more capable adversary (were the United States to intervene to support a challenger) may be able to inflict greater cost on the United States and those costs may persuade the United States to remain uninvolved.

Finally, the target state's level of democracy may also be a driver of a third-party intervention. For example, some work suggests that interventions that offer the opportunity for democracy promotion may be more likely than other types of interventions.[40] By extension, the United States may be more likely to intervene in conflicts where a democracy is weak or threatened by an authoritarian power or illegitimate challenger and may be more apt to use deterrence to protect key democracies under threat.[41] It should be noted, however, this same work calls into question whether democracy promotion interventions actually increase the level of democracy in the target state.[42] Since the interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States has been less inclined to launch significant democracy promotion interventions. However, even if democracy is less important as a driver of U.S. interventions in the current context, there are other characteristics of the target state, including economic development and military capability that may still play a large role in shaping U.S. decisions about where and when to intervene.

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[39] Aydin, 2010; Aubone, 2013.

[40]   James Meernik, "United States Military Intervention and the Promotion of Democracy," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 33, No. 4, November 1996, pp. 391–402; Andrew J. Enterline and J. Michael Greig, "Beacons of Hope? The Impact of Imposed Democracy on Regional Peace, Democracy, and Prosperity," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 67, No. 4, November 2005, pp. 1075–1098.

[41]   Meernik, 1996; Enterline and Greig, 2005.

[42]   Meernik, 1996; Enterline and Greig, 2005.

Characteristics of the Relationship Between the Target State and the United States

Characteristics of the relationship between the United States and the target state also appear to affect the likelihood of military intervention. Previous work has shown that a country is more likely to intervene into conflicts or crises in states where it has strong military ties, either through an alliance, military cooperation, military assistance spending, or even a previous intervention.[43] The existence of an alliance between one state and another appears to be a robust predictor of the likelihood of an intervention by the first state in the second.[44] However, while the effect of an alliance on intervention likelihood seems positive, there is no evidence that military assistance spending to a state contributed to an increased likelihood of an intervention.[45] There is similarly little evidence that economic ties between two countries affects the likelihood of an intervention.[46] Shared ethnicity or other cultural similarities between two countries do, however, appear to increase the likelihood of an intervention, particularly that of a major power into a minor one.[47] This effect is especially strong for the United States, as it seems significantly more likely to intervene in countries with which it shares ethnic and cultural ties than in countries where those ties do not exist.[48] Alliances certainly played a major role in driving U.S. military interventions during the Cold War in a bipolar world. However, they remain an important and sometimes binding factor in intervention decisions even today. As declining budgets force the United States to be more selective about where and when it intervenes with ground forces, it may be increasingly likely to concentrate on those alliances to assist and defend key allies and partners.

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[43] Huth, 1998.

[44] Findley and Teo, 2006.

[45] Yoon, 1997; Rost and Greig, 2011.

[46] Yoon, 1997.

[47] Kathman, 2010; Rost and Greig, 2011.

[48] Mullenbach and Matthews, 2008.

U.S. Interests

Not mentioned explicitly thus far has been the role of U.S. interests in decisions about where and when the U.S. sends ground forces. Of course, every decision about the deployment of U.S. military personnel is driven, in at least some way, by U.S. interests, be they economic, political, ideological, or strategic. For example, during the Cold War, many U.S. interventions were driven by a desire to prevent the spread of communism and to ensure the stability of friendly regimes in key states. Early interventions into Mexico, Panama, and Cuba were driven by a desire to ensure access to key trade routes and natural resources and to protect U.S. borders. More recent interventions have been motivated by a desire to contain and destroy al-Qaeda and ISIS. U.S. interests may be the determining factor between two similar potential interventions. For example, the U.S. intervened in Bosnia in response to severe ethnic violence, but not in a similar case of genocide in Rwanda, at least in part due to the location of Bosnia (on the doorstep of Europe) and its closer relation with U.S. interests.

Existing work has taken a number of different approaches to operationalizing U.S. interests in statistical models. These include the use of variables to capture specific strategic approaches of past U.S. presidents (e.g., the Truman doctrine) or the presence of theorized key U.S. interests such as "communist states," "oil exporting states," or "threats to U.S. lives." As discussed in the review of literature above, while some of these variables do appear to affect the likelihood of U.S. interventions, others do not. In our analysis, we include a number of different variables in our models to capture different types and manifestations of U.S. interests. These include

- closeness of the relationship of a country with the United States, which can reflect the importance of the target state to U.S. interests
- devastation of a conflict, which helps to determine the significance of the conflict to the international system and the United States
- domestic politics, which includes the foreign policy doctrine of the U.S. president
- location of the target state
- level of military assistance to the target, which may be another indicator of the U.S. commitment to the host.

Finally, we also discuss U.S. interests in Chapter Five, in the context of case studies.

Limitations of Existing Research

As noted above, existing research into factors that affect U.S. intervention decisions has several important limitations. First, existing work varies significantly in the types of interventions included in the analysis. In many cases, different types or means of interventions (e.g., ground, naval, and air; or interventions in armed conflicts and deterrence) are considered together, despite the fact that they may have very different motivating factors. This can lead to conflicting results across studies and also misleading results if, in fact, different types of interventions have different driving factors. This ambiguity limits the ability of Army planners to rely on existing work for signposts for coming interventions. Second, many existing empirical analyses are fairly limited in time frame. Many stop in the late 1990s, and most start only after 1946. As a result, their results are primarily applicable to the Cold War and it is unclear how consistently they continue to apply to interventions at present and in the future. Finally, much existing work stops at identifying factors that seem to shape the likelihood of military interventions without then translating these key factors into actionable signposts or metrics that the Army can use to anticipate future interventions. Furthermore, existing work considers primarily the determinants of the likelihood of U.S. military interventions without also exploring questions that are of equal and significant practical use to Army planners, such as the determinants of intervention size, the potential for clustering of interventions in time and space, and any relationship between intervention type and duration. We include these additional analyses in this report while also providing a detailed analysis of historical trends in U.S. interventions, in terms of size, activity, duration, location, and unit type involved.

However, despite these limitations, the literature identifies a large number of important factors that are likely to play a role in where and when the United States chooses to intervene militarily. We use existing literature and these factors to guide our statistical analysis, but our analysis provides nuance by considering a longer time period and

specific types of interventions. We focus on those factors that appear to have the most statistical evidence supporting them and that have the strongest theoretical rationale. These include (but are not limited to): the size and devastation of the conflict; the number of refugees; relationship between the target and the United States; U.S. capabilities; wealth and capabilities of the target state; geographic location of the target; and, U.S. domestic politics.

Identifying Determinants of the Likelihood and Size of Ground Interventions

As can be seen in our historical analysis of U.S. ground interventions in Chapter Two, U.S. interventions can range widely in the activities they conduct. There is therefore unlikely to be any single set of indicators that can be used to predict them. Instead, based on our review of the RUGID data, we identified three main circumstances in which the United States has historically intervened using ground forces:

- interventions into armed conflicts
- interventions to conduct stability operations
- interventions to increase deterrence.

We therefore built separate statistical models of the likelihood and size of U.S. ground interventions in each of these circumstances, and identified the factors that have historically been associated with these outcomes.

Our results highlighted a diverse set of factors that appear to be promising signposts for the size and likelihood of different types of U.S. interventions. While the results varied from model to model, a few overall patterns stand out. First, the United States is generally more likely to intervene in states with which it has a close prior relationship, although these interventions tend to be smaller than those in other states. Second, in most models the United States appears to scale the size of its intervention to the size of the conflict or state in which it is intervening. Token interventions into larger conflicts do not appear to

be the norm. Third, there were a number of factors that the literature put forward as potential explanations that we did not find support for in any of our models. These included particularly U.S. domestic political factors and the overall level of conflict or violence in the world. Eliminating these factors from consideration as signposts was also an important finding. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 provide a summary of the key results for each of our models.

Below we provide a brief summary of the methodology, selection of explanatory variables, and the results for each model, but the full

Table 3.1
Summary of Key Determinants of Likelihood of Ground Interventions By Type

Interventions into Armed Conflict	Stability Operations	Deterrence
U.S. capabilities Previous intervention Close relationship w/ U.S.	Involvement combat phase U.S. military assistance Refugees generated Location of target	U.S. economic growth U.S. capabilities U.S. military assistance Degree of threat Close relationship w/ U.S.
War weariness	Ongoing U.S. interventions	

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Blue cells indicate factors that decrease the likelihood of interventions. Red cells indicate factors that increase the likelihood.

Table 3.2
Summary of Key Determinants of Size of Ground Interventions By Type

Interventions into Armed Conflict	Stability Operations	Deterrence
U.S. capabilities Destructiveness of war	Number of troops in combat U.S. military assistance Refugees generated	U.S. economic growth Close relationship w/ U.S. Degree of threat Wealth of target
Close relationship w/ U.S. War weariness	Close relationship w/ U.S. Wealth of the target	

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Blue cells indicate factors that decrease the size of interventions. Red cells indicate factors that increase the size.

statistical results and regression tables are available in Appendix D. Further, while these summaries do include some discussion of the relative size of the effects that each variable has, this issue is covered much more extensively in Chapter Six, which discusses the operationalization of the identified factors as signposts.

Methodology: An Overview

As described above, the existing literature suggests a large number of variables that may determine the likelihood and size of potential U.S. military interventions. While these variables may each be pieces of the puzzle, they are unlikely to all be equally useful as signposts. Some variables may be strong indicators of a U.S. intervention, while others may be much more loosely related. Our goal was therefore to identify the set of these variables that were most closely and consistently related to each of our three main types of U.S. interventions.

Our general approach to our three models (interventions into armed conflict, stability operations, and deterrent interventions) was largely similar. First, we identified both potential and actual cases of U.S. interventions in each category. How we identified these potential and actual cases is discussed in detail below. Second, we identified the universe of possible explanatory variables that we wanted to test in our statistical analysis. In each case, the set of potential variables drew heavily from the literature discussed in Chapter Two. We then conducted the analysis to identify the determinants that are most likely to influence the likelihood and size of U.S. interventions. Finally, we used our models and their results to identify signposts of future interventions that may be valuable to Army leaders, planners, and policymakers. This chapter presents the first three of these steps, for each of our three types of interventions. Our discussion of the signposts is included in Chapter Six. Before turning to the discussion of our three sets of models and their results, we discuss several important general considerations that shaped our approach.

Considerations for statistical approach

The purpose of our analyses was to identify which of the variables listed in Tables 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 were most clearly and consistently associated

with either the likelihood or the size of the different types of U.S. intervention.[49] To do so, we faced three main challenges that we took specific methodological steps to address.

Large numbers of independent variables

As can be seen in the list of potential explanations suggested by the literature in Tables 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5, we started our analysis with an unusually large number of potential independent variables that might affect the likelihood or size of U.S. military interventions. Multivariate regression analysis would ordinarily suggest including all variables of substantive importance together in a model, and then assessing which appeared to be most closely associated with the outcome variable of interest, in our case the likelihood or size of a U.S. intervention. However, this approach on its own was unlikely to produce reliable results given the unusually large number of variables with which we began our analysis, for two reasons. First, many of these variables were highly correlated with one another, making identifying the effects of each variable individually more challenging. Second, U.S. interventions are relatively rare events, and the small number of positive observations in the dependent variable (i.e. interventions) can limit the number of independent variables that can be reliably assessed at one time. For these reasons, we pursued a modified approach. We began by assessing the relationship between the size or likelihood of a U.S. intervention and each potential explanatory variable individually to determine where these individual relationships were statistically significant. With the resulting list of individually correlated variables, we looked to see how interrelated these variables were with one another. In the event that one or more variables were highly correlated with others, making them difficult to assess together, we dropped those that seemed to have the greatest degree of conceptual overlap with other variables also on the list. We then ran a multivariate analysis with all of the remaining

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[49] By contrast, we were not trying to build the best overall predictive model of the likelihood of a U.S. intervention, regardless of the variables that made it up. The goal of this report was to identify potential signposts that other analysts could employ without the need for these analysts to employ more complex statistical models. This distinction may seem technical, but it informed our methodology, as will be discussed below.

variables in the model together. Typically, several variables became no longer statistically significant in these models. We dropped these variables that lacked statistical significance from the model in the reverse order of how highly correlated they appeared to be, until we were left with a set of variables that were all statistically significant.[50] The purpose of this exercise was not to build the best performing statistical model.[51] Instead, our goal was to identify the set of variables that were most reliably and consistently statistically significantly related to the likelihood or size of a U.S. intervention. That is, to identify the variables that we could most reliably recommend as signposts for analysts not employing detailed statistical models.

Likelihood vs. size

While we were interested in variables that affected both the likelihood and size of U.S. military interventions, we recognized that we needed to construct different models to get at these different dimensions. We started with models to assess the likelihood of a U.S. intervention. In these models, since our dependent variable was binary (the United States either intervened or it did not) we employed a logit model, typically considered to be the most appropriate statistical model when assessing a binary dependent variable. Assessing the size of potential U.S. military interventions was more complex. To begin with, we believed that the United States decision regarding precisely how many troops to send was likely to occur as the "second stage" to the decision regarding whether to become involved at all.[52] As such, we built two stage statistical models as well, with the first stage made up of the

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[50] To clarify, we dropped variables in the order of their "p-values," dropping the highest values first, until we were left with variables whose p-values were all below 0.1.

[51] If we had aimed at this, we would likely have looked for multicollinearity among the large number of independent variables, but otherwise been content to include a much larger number of these in our models, even if they were not all necessarily statistically significant at the p<.1 level.

[52] In this approach, the first "stage" is the decision to intervene at all and the second "stage" is to determine the size of the intervention. Of course, these decisions are not completely independent, as expectations regarding size certainly also affect intervention decisions. But, we felt that this "two stage" dynamic was likely to be sufficiently present to help drive our modeling strategy.

likelihood models already described, and the second stage assessing the size of the U.S. interventions that did occur.[53]

Independence of observations

For statistical models to be most effective, the observations they include should all be independent of one another. That is, the likelihood that a state would experience a war in one year would be unrelated to the likelihood that it would experience a war in the next. In practice, of course, observations are rarely fully independent in this manner. If a war is going on in a state in one year, it makes it much more likely that that state will experience a war in the subsequent year as well. This lack of independence among observations creates difficulties for statistical analysis, because it can make independent variables more likely to appear to be statistically significant than would otherwise be the case. There are a number of techniques common to the quantitative political science literature that can be employed to help minimize this concern, including adding a one year lag of the dependent variable to the model, looking only at the initiation year of events such as military interventions, or including "peace year polynomial" variables.[54] One of these approaches is not necessarily better than the others. As a result, we chose to test our models using each of these techniques. We were then more confident in results that persisted across each type of model, and less confident in results that only appeared in some of them. Combined with the degree of statistical significance that each variable enjoyed, the variable's performance across these different types of models informed our assessments of the level of confidence we had in each variable, as will be discussed in our results section below. The full regression tables are presented for interested readers in Appendix D. We now turn to the discussion of our three models.

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[53]   The two stage models we used were "Heckman" models. See James J. Heckman, "The Common Structure of Statistical Models of Truncation, Sample Selection and Limited Dependent Variables and a Simple Estimator for Such Models," *Annals of Economic and Social Measurement*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1976, pp. 475–492.

[54]   See David B. Carter and Curtis S. Signorino, "Back to the Future: Modeling Time Dependence in Binary Data," *Political Analysis*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 2010, pp. 271–292.

Interventions into Armed Conflicts

Constructing models of interventions into armed conflicts

Our first task was to build the set of cases where U.S. interventions into armed conflicts were possible. To do so, we relied on the Correlates of War (COW) and Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) datasets, the two most frequently used conflict datasets in the academic literature, to identify all wars that occurred between 1900 and 2014.[55] Wars were defined as armed conflicts in which there were at least 1,000 battle deaths in a given year.[56] From this set of wars, we created a list of each country that was experiencing war in a given year.[57] It was this country-year dataset that we used as the set of cases where a U.S. military intervention into an armed conflict was possible. We then added all of the different potential explanatory variables listed in Table 3.3 for each country year.

To identify the set of cases where U.S. military interventions into armed conflicts actually occurred, we looked for matches between the dataset of country-years involving war, and the RUGID data on U.S. military interventions described in the previous chapter. Matches indicated that the United States did conduct an intervention in that particular country-year of war, and the RUGID data also specified how many U.S. troops were involved. To be clear, these interventions did not need to be combat interventions, although many were. They could also have been training missions to support one side in the conflict, security missions to protect U.S. interests threatened by the conflict, or any other activity conducted in the country during the year it was at war.

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[55] Meredith Reid Sarkees and Frank Wayman, *Resort to War: 1816–2007*, Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2010; Thérése Pettersson and Peter Wallensteen, "Armed Conflicts, 1946–2014," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 52, No. 4, July 2015.

[56] These wars included those that were interstate (between two states), intrastate (between a state and a non-state group within the state's territory), extrastate (between a state and a non-state group outside the state's territory), and non-state (between two non-state groups) in nature.

[57] We operationalized the two world wars differently from other wars. Given the massive geographic scope of these two conflicts, and the low probability that U.S. leaders would have made separate intervention decisions when sending troops across each international border, we treated World War I as a single "country," and World War II as two different "countries," one to represent the European theater of the war, and another to represent the Pacific.

Choosing explanatory variables

Our review of the literature highlighted a large number of potential factors that might correlate with the likelihood and size of a U.S. intervention into an armed conflict. These variables can be divided into the five main categories that we identified above in our discussion of the literature:

- characteristics of the international environment, including the degree of U.S. hegemony in the year in question and the amount of conflict ongoing in the world[58]
- characteristics of the war or conflict itself, including the number of casualties that had previously taken place before the year in question[59]
- characteristics of the state experiencing the war or conflict, including its overall level of economic and political development[60]
- domestic characteristics of the United States, including available military capabilities and potential war weariness[61]
- characteristics of the relationship between the United States and the state experiencing the war or conflict, including the closeness of economic, political, and social ties.[62]

A full list of the variables we tested in our statistical models, as well as how we operationalized each of these variables in order to test them, is included in Table 3.3. As noted above, U.S. interests are not called out explicitly, because many of the factors alluded to in the list above operationalize aspects of U.S. interests, including characteristics of the target states, the relationship between the United States and the target state, and characteristics of the war.

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[58] See, for example, James and O'Neal, 1991; Brands, 1988; Regan, 2002.

[59] See, for example, Regan, 2002; Rost and Greig, 2011.

[60] See, for example, Aubone, 2013; Yoon, 1997; Aydin, 2010.

[61] See, for example, Tago, 2005; Western, 2005; Ostrom Jr. and Job, 1986; Meernik, 2001; Mueller, 1989; Pickering, 2002; Rost and Greig, 2011; Huth, 1998.

[62] See, for example, Huth, 1998; Findley and Teo, 2006; Kathman, 2010; Mullenbach and Matthews, 2008.

Table 3.3
Variables Included in Our Models of the Likelihood and Size of U.S. Interventions into Armed Conflicts

Category	Proposed Relationship	Variable	Data Source
The international environment	Dominant U.S. position increases likelihood of U.S. intervention	Degree of U.S. global hegemony	Correlates of War National Military Capabilities (COW NMC) data;[a] Maddison/World Bank GDP data[b]
		Degree of U.S. regional hegemony	RAND-developed regional hegemony metric[c]
	More ongoing wars in the system reduces likelihood of U.S. intervention	Number of wars ongoing each year/ Number of battle deaths worldwide each year	COW/Uppsala Conflict Data (UCDP) war data[d]
Characteristics of the war	Heavy costs from war increase likelihood of U.S. intervention	Cumulative casualties from prior years of the conflict	COW/UCDP battle death data[e]

[a] David J. Singer, "Reconstructing the Correlates of War Dataset on Material Capabilities of States, 1816–1985," *International Interactions*, Vol. 14, 1987, pp. 115–32.

[b] Angus Maddison, *The World Economy: Historical Statistics*, Paris: Development Centre of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2003, 2012 update; World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2013*, doi: 10.1596/978-0-8213-9824-1, License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0, Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2013.

[c] Stephen Watts, Bryan Frederick, Jennifer Kavanagh, Angela O'Mahony, Thomas S. Szayna, Matthew Lane, Alexander Stephenson, Colin P. Clarke, *A More Peaceful World? Regional Conflict Trends and U.S. Defense Planning*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-1177-A, May 2015.

[d] Sarkees and Wayman, 2010; Pettersson and Wallensteen, 2015.

[e] Sarkees and Wayman 2010; Uppsala Conflict Data Program, *UCDP Battle-Related Deaths*, Dataset v.5-2015, Uppsala University. In the UCDP dataset, battle-related deaths are defined as: "Battle-related deaths refer to those deaths caused by the warring parties that can be directly related to combat2. This includes traditional battlefield fighting, guerrilla activities (e.g., hit-and-run attacks/ambushes) and all kinds of bombardments of military bases, cities and villages etc. Urban warfare (bombs, explosions, and assassinations) does not resemble what happens on a battlefield, but such deaths are considered to be battle-related. The target for the attacks is either the military forces or representatives for the parties, though there is often substantial collateral damage in the form of civilians being killed in the crossfire, indiscriminate bombings, etc. All fatalities—military as well as civilian—incurred in such situations are counted as battle-related deaths." (See *UCDP Battle-Related Deaths*, p. 6).

Table 3.3—Continued

Category	Proposed Relationship	Variable	Data Source
Characteristics of the state experiencing the war	Higher levels of development increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Level of democracy	Polity IV Data[f]
		Level of economic development	Maddison/World Bank GDP data
	Important natural resource exports increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Volume of oil and gas exports, natural log	RAND collected data
Characteristics of the United States	More politically powerful presidencies increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Presidential approval ratings	Presidential Approval Ratings—Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends[g]
		President's party's control of Congress	Composition of Congress by Political Party, Office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives[h]
		Year of presidential electoral cycle	U.S. Election Atlas[i]
	War weariness: proximity to costly or unsuccessful intervention reduces likelihood of future interventions	U.S. combat deaths in prior years	U.S. DoD Defense Casualty Analysis System (DCAS) Data[j]

[f] Monty G. Marshall and Keith Jaggers, *Polity IV Data Set, [Computer file; version p4v2014]*, College Park, Md.: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland, 2002.

[g] Gallup, *Presidential Approval Ratings—Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends*, web page.

[h] History, Art & Archives, United States House of Representatives, *Party Divisions of the House of Representatives, 1789–Present*, web page.

[i] David Leip, "Presidential Election Dates," *U.S. Election Atlas*, 2008.

[j] U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Casualty Analysis System, *Active Duty Military Deaths by Year and Manner 1980–2010 (As of November 2011)*, web page. See also Nese F. DeBruyne and Anne Leland, *American War and Military Operations Casualties: Lists and Statistics*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, January 2, 2015.

Table 3.3—Continued

Category	Proposed Relationship	Variable	Data Source
		Time since previous unsuccessful, large-scale intervention	RAND coded metric
	More prosperous U.S. economy increases the likelihood of U.S. intervention	U.S. GDP growth	Maddison/World Bank GDP data
	More capable U.S. military increases the likelihood of U.S. intervention	U.S. military spending, lagged	COW/NMC data
		Size of U.S. military, lagged	COW/NMC data
		Number of ongoing U.S. military interventions	RUGID
Relationship between the United States and the state experiencing the war	Close ties with the United States increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Geographic proximity	Minimum distance data[k]
		Importance of bilateral trade to the U.S. economy	Barbieri trade data;[l] Maddison/World Bank GDP data
		Mutual defensive alliance	COW alliance data[m]
		Diaspora in the United States	RAND-collected diaspora data from U.S. census
		Previous U.S. military assistance	Greenbook data[n]

[k] Kristian S. Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward, "Measuring Space: A Minimum Distance Database," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 6, 2000, pp. 749–768.

[l] Katherine Barbieri and Omar Keshk, *Correlates of War Project Trade Data Set Codebook*, Version 3.0, 2012.

[m] Douglas M. Gibler, *International Military Alliances, 1648–2008*, Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2009.

[n] U.S. Agency for International Development, *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants, Obligations and Loan Authorizations, July 1, 1945–September 30, 2014*, Washington, D.C.: USAID, 2015.

Table 3.3—Continued

Category	Proposed Relationship	Variable	Data Source
		Previous U.S. economic assistance	Greenbook data
		Past U.S. intervention in the country	RUGID

NOTE: Data covered the years 1900 to 2014 wherever possible.

Results

Two variables stood out as most clearly affecting the likelihood of a U.S. military intervention into an armed conflict. First, the closer the relationship of the state experiencing the conflict to the United States, as measured by the presence of a defensive alliance agreement or the amount of prior U.S. military assistance, the more likely a U.S. intervention.[63] Second, the more recent and more traumatic the U.S. experience with other interventions, including measures of recent U.S. combat deaths, the less likely a U.S. intervention.[64] This finding of a relationship between past U.S. combat deaths and the likelihood of subsequent interventions is important, as it provides empirical evidence of "war weariness," a commonly accepted argument about how past interventions may influence future ones, that has been largely theoretic to this point. Three other factors also affected the likelihood of U.S. intervention into an armed conflict, although we had a somewhat

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[63] It is important to note, however, that the close prior relationship with the United States variables were not as consistently statistically significant when we performed robustness checks that excluded repeat interventions into the same countries. This could suggest, for example, that while a U.S. alliance overall increases the likelihood that the United States will intervene into an ongoing conflict, this may apply primarily to countries in which the United States has intervened before. It may instead be that the United States becomes closer to some countries in which it has intervened, and these countries are particularly likely to see subsequent interventions if they again fall into conflict. If policymakers are focused on identifying novel intervention locations where the United States has never previously intervened, then the closeness of the relationship with the United States may be less salient. That said, substantial evidence does remain that closeness of the relationship with the United States is in fact a useful predictor of initial interventions into countries experiencing armed conflict as well, so we mention this potential issue out of an abundance of caution.

[64] As detailed in Chapter Seven, the "war weariness" effect persisted for roughly nine years.

more modest degree of confidence in these relationships. Greater U.S. capabilities, measured by a higher degree of U.S. global or regional hegemony, and the destructiveness of the war, measured by the number of battle deaths in prior years, were associated with a higher likelihood of intervention, while the amount of oil a state produces was actually negatively related to the likelihood that the United States would intervene in an armed conflict in that state. These results are summarized in Figure 3.1.

Our analysis of the factors that affected the size of U.S. interventions into armed conflicts highlighted a largely different set of variables as statistically significant. The destructiveness of the war, as measured by the number of battle deaths in prior years of the war, was associated with a larger U.S. intervention. This is likely because more destructive conflicts require a larger number of U.S. forces. By contrast, the closer the relationship between the state experiencing the conflict and the United States, the smaller the resulting intervention. We hypothesize that this is likely because U.S. allies tend to be disproportionately more militarily capable, and the U.S. assistance required proportionately smaller. The factors in which we had medium confidence included

Figure 3.1
Factors Affecting the Likelihood of U.S. Interventions into Armed Conflicts

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-3.1*

Figure 3.2
Factors Affecting the Size of U.S. Interventions into Armed Conflicts

	High confidence	Medium confidence
Increase size	Destructiveness of the war	Greater available U.S. capabilities
Decrease size	Close prior relationship with the U.S.	Recent U.S. traumatic experience with warfare
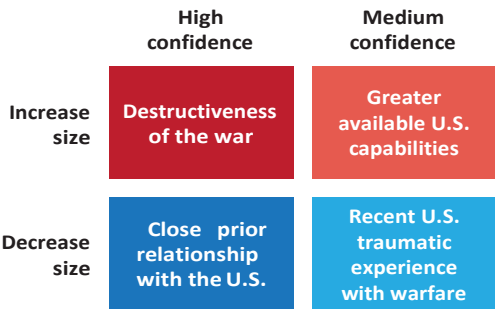
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
RAND *RR1831A-3.2*

greater U.S. capabilities (as measured by total U.S. military person-nel or spending), which were associated with larger interventions, and "war weariness" (measured by recent U.S. negative experience with war), which was associated with smaller interventions. These results are summarized in Figure 3.2.

Interventions to Conduct Stability Operations
Constructing models of interventions to conduct stability operations

The models we developed to assess the likelihood and size of U.S. sta-bility operations were in many ways similar to those we developed to assess potential interventions into armed conflicts. We started with the set of all wars or conflicts that have occurred since 1900.[65] As stability

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[65] Wars involved 1,000 or more battle deaths in a given year, while conflicts involved 25 or more battle deaths in a given year. Data on these lower-intensity conflicts were only available after 1945. Adding these lower-intensity conflicts where possible allowed us to investigate a broader set of cases than just looking at wars. While the models looking at interventions into armed conflicts focused on higher-intensity wars only, in the case of stability opera-tions we decided that this larger set of conflicts was more appropriate, because even lower-intensity conflicts could still lead to disproportionately unstable post-conflict phases that could require stability operations. Sarkees and Wayman, 2010; Pettersson and Wallensteen, 2015.

operations could plausibly have occurred either during the conflict or after it was over, for each conflict in that set, we then added ten "post-conflict" country-years following the end of the conflict. The resulting set of country-years was the total list of cases where U.S. stability operations were plausible.[66] We then added all of the variables listed in Table 3.4 to each of these country years.

To identify the cases where U.S. stability operations did in fact occur, and the number of U.S. troops involved, we again relied on the RUGID data introduced in Chapter Two. From these data, we selected only those interventions where either the primary, secondary, or tertiary activity type was coded as being a stability operation. We then matched the resulting list of stability operations into specific country-years with our overall set of potential cases.

Potential explanatory variables for interventions to conduct stability operations

Our review highlighted a further list of candidate variables to explain the likelihood and size of U.S. stability operation interventions. Several of these categories of variables were highly similar to those we assessed in our interventions into armed conflict models, including the international environment, the characteristics of the state where the intervention might occur, characteristics of the United States, and the characteristics of the relationship between the state in question and the United States. Importantly, these factors also capture U.S. interests. The main differences in the variables considered in these models were due to consideration of the characteristics of the conflict that preceded the stability operation, such as, for example, the size of the refugee flows generated.[67] Table 3.4 summarizes the full list of variables we considered in these models, as well as how each variable was operationalized quantitatively for testing in our statistical models that are discussed in more detail below.

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[66] Ten post-conflict years allowed our model to capture the majority of cases, roughly 60%, in which stability operations have historically occurred, without dramatically inflating our set of cases by including years that were too far removed from the original conflict for the operation to be plausibly related.

[67] See, for example, Mullenbach and Matthews, 2008; Rost and Greig, 2011.

Table 3.4
Variables Included in Our Models of the Likelihood and Size of U.S. Stability Operation Interventions

Category	Proposed Relationship	Variable	Data Source
The international environment	Dominant U.S. position increases likelihood of U.S. intervention	Degree of U.S. global hegemony	COW NMC data; Maddison/World Bank GDP data
		Degree of U.S. regional hegemony	RAND-developed regional hegemony metric
	More ongoing wars in the system/region reduces likelihood of U.S. intervention	Number of wars ongoing in each year/ Number of battle deaths ongoing in each year	COW/UCDP war data
Characteristics of the country where the intervention may occur	Higher levels of development increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Level of democracy	Polity IV data
		Level of economic development	Maddison/World Bank GDP data
	Important natural resource exports increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Volume of oil production, natural log	RAND-collected data
Characteristics of the United States	More prosperous U.S. economy increases the likelihood of U.S. intervention	U.S. GDP growth	Maddison/World Bank GDP data
	More capable U.S. military increases the likelihood of U.S. intervention	U.S. military spending, lagged	COW NMC data
		Size of U.S. military, lagged	COW NMC data
		Number/size of ongoing U.S. military interventions	RUGID
	War weariness: other recent costly interventions reduce likelihood of future interventions	Number of U.S. combat deaths in recent, prior years	U.S. DoD DCAS Data

Table 3.4—Continued

Category	Proposed Relationship	Variable	Data Source
Relationship between the United States and the potential stability operations state	Stability operations more likely if United States was involved in a war there in preceding years	U.S. involvement/ number of troops in the prior war	RUGID
	Strategic Importance of the country to the United States	Whether the country was located in Europe	RAND-coded metric
	Close ties with the United States increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Geographic proximity to the United States	Minimum distance data
		Previous U.S. military assistance	Greenbook data
		Previous U.S. economic assistance	Greenbook data
		Importance of bilateral trade to the U.S. economy	Barbieri trade data; Maddison/ World Bank GDP data
		Mutual defensive alliance	COW alliance data
		Diaspora in the United States	RAND-collected diaspora data from U.S. Census
Characteristics of the conflict preceding the stability operation	Stability operations more likely if devastation from the conflict prior to the stability operation is high	Number battle deaths (number of deaths in the war prior to the stability operation)	COW/UCDP battle death data
	Stability operations more likely if the war involved a democratizing regime change	Whether state became more democratic after the end of the war	Polity IV
	Stability operations more likely if war involved a humanitarian crisis	Size of refugee flows from country	UNHCR[a]
	Stability operations more likely if war was interstate	Whether the war was interstate or not	COW/UCDP

[a] UNHCR Population Statistics Database, web site.

NOTE: Data covered the years 1900 to 2014 wherever possible.

Results

Our models assessing the likelihood of a U.S. stability operation intervention identified several factors as increasing the likelihood of such interventions. These included U.S. involvement in the prior combat phase, the number of refugees from the country in question, whether the country was located in Europe, and the extent of prior U.S. military assistance to the country. For example, the United States was roughly twice as likely to intervene in potential cases in Europe than in other regions. Details on other metrics are included in Chapter Six. Our models did suggest one potential restraining factor for stability operations, the number of other ongoing U.S. interventions, although we had only medium confidence in this relationship. These results are summarized in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3
Factors Affecting the Likelihood of U.S. Stability Operation Interventions

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-3.3*
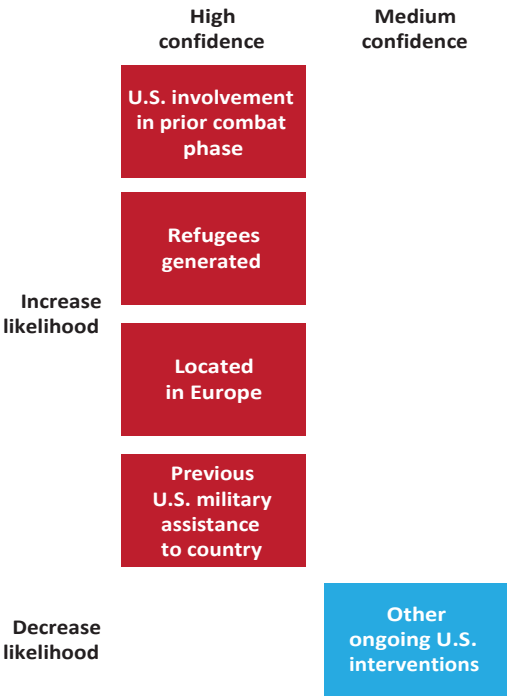
   The factors most closely linked with the size of U.S. stability oper-
ations that did occur included the number of troops (if any) that took
part in the prior combat phase. As will be discussed in detail in Chap-
ter Six, for every 1,000 troops added to the combat intervention, our
models suggested that about 300 more troops would be added to a
subsequent stability operation intervention. In addition, close relations
with the United States (as measured by a mutual defensive alliance)
and the relative wealth of the country (measured by GDP per capita)
were associated with smaller U.S. interventions. We had a more mod-
erate degree of confidence in two additional factors, the number of
refugees generated and the amount of prior U.S. economic assistance,
each of which was associated with larger U.S. stability operation inter-
ventions. These results are summarized in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4
Factors Affecting the Size of U.S. Stability Operation Interventions

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-3.4*
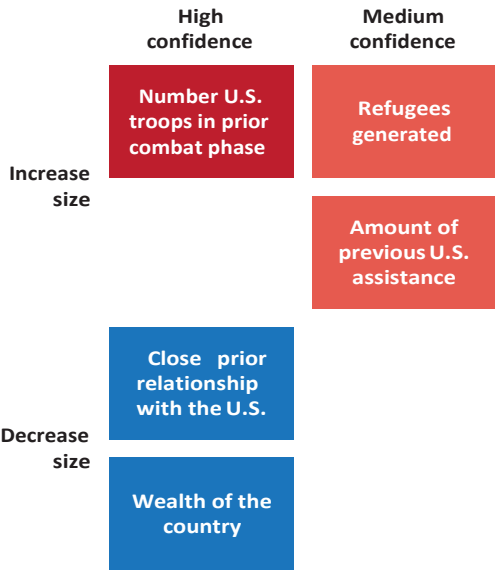
Interventions to Increase Deterrence

Constructing models of interventions to increase deterrence

Building models of deterrent interventions required us to start with a much wider set of cases. While U.S. interventions into armed conflict or stability operations would logically occur primarily in conjunction with notable incidents of violence, deterrence interventions would be undertaken precisely to avoid such incidents. They would indeed occur primarily at peacetime. As such, we included in our set of potential cases all country years in the international system since 1946.[68] To this set of country-years, we then added all of the variables listed in Table 3.5.

We identified the cases where U.S. deterrent interventions occurred, as well as the number of troops involved in each, by using the RUGID data. We included all intervention country-years where either the primary, secondary, or tertiary intervention type was coded as deterrence, similar to our procedure for identifying stability operations. We then matched this list of deterrence cases with the set of country-years since 1946.

Potential explanatory variables for interventions to increase deterrence

Our third set of models, those investigating the likelihood and size of deterrence interventions, also shared many variables with the previously discussed armed conflict and stability operations models. The variables intended to reflect the international environment, the characteristics of the potential host state, domestic characteristics of the United States, and the nature of the relationship between the potential host state and the United States were largely similar. However, the deterrence models incorporated a new category of variables, those reflecting the nature of the threat to the potential host country that the U.S. military intervention would be intended to deter.[69] We measured potential threats to the country in several ways, looking for neighboring countries that

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[68] Very few U.S. deterrent interventions occurred prior to 1946, allowing us to use this narrower timeframe. By contrast, U.S. interventions into armed conflicts and stability operations were still reasonably common in the 1900 to 1945 period.

[69] See, for example, James and O'Neal, 1991; Brands, 1988; Lagon, 1992; Huth, 2009; Kocs, 1995.

were more powerful than the host state, had a history of militarized disputes, had unresolved territorial disputes toward the host state, and other related factors. This set of factors is particularly important in the context of the discussion of U.S. interests previously in this chapter. Specifically, the threat facing a potential host state is likely to be most salient to U.S. policymakers when they are directly relevant to U.S. political or strategic or economic goals (e.g., communist expansion, territorial conquest). The full list of variables included in these models, as well as how each was operationalized for use in our statistical models, is included in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5
Variables Included in Our Models of the Likelihood and Size of U.S. Deterrent Interventions

Category	Proposed Relationship	Variable	Data Source
The international environment	Dominant U.S. position increases likelihood of U.S. intervention	Degree of U.S. global hegemony	COW NMC data; Maddison/World Bank GDP data
		Degree of U.S. regional hegemony	RAND-developed regional hegemony metric
	More ongoing wars in the system/region reduces likelihood of U.S. intervention	Number of wars ongoing in each year/Number of battle deaths ongoing in each year	COW/UCDP war data
Characteristics of the threat or the threatening country	Deterrent intervention more likely if state faces more pronounced threat	Index incorporating • large capabilities imbalance • history of militarized disputes • lack of joint democracy • target of higher salience territorial dispute	COW NMC data, MID data, Polity IV data, ICOW Territorial Claims data[a]
	Deterrent intervention more likely if the threat is territorial	U.S. partner target of high salience territorial claim	ICOW Territorial Claims data

[a] High salience territorial claims included those that were 9 or higher on the Issue Correlates of War [ICOW] 12-point scale. The scale incorporates numerous tangible and intangible salience measures, such as population, natural resources, strategic value, and ethnic and religious importance. See Paul R. Hensel, Sara McLaughlin

Table 3.5—Continued

Category	Proposed Relationship	Variable	Data Source
Characteristics of the state experiencing the threat	Higher levels of development increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Level of democracy	Polity IV data
		Level of economic development	Maddison/World Bank GDP data
	Important natural resource exports increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Volume of oil production, natural log	RAND-collected data
	Strong host nation security decreases the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Latent or actual nuclear weapons capability[b]	Fuhrmann and Tkach latency data[c]
Domestic characteristics of the United States	More prosperous U.S. economy increases the likelihood of U.S. intervention	U.S. GDP growth	Maddison/World Bank GDP data
	More capable U.S. military increases the likelihood of U.S. intervention	U.S. military spending, lagged	NMC data

Mitchell, Thomas E. Sowers, and Clayton L. Thyne, "Bones of Contention Comparing Territorial, Maritime, and River Issues," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 52, No. 1, February 2008, pp. 117–143; Bryan A. Frederick, Paul R. Hensel, and Christopher Macaulay, *The Provisional ICOW Territorial Claims Data: Procedures and Description*, 2014, unpublished manuscript, currently under review.

[b] To clarify, latent nuclear capability is only one of many potential metrics that may reflect the strength of a host nation's security. A state's security can be strengthened by many other factors including its conventional capabilities and its alliance relationships. However, metrics that are correlated with many of these other factors are already included elsewhere in our analysis, including the metrics for alliance with the United States and the nation's GDP. Incorporating a separate measure of the latent nuclear capabilities of the state, however, allows us to incorporate an additional dynamic that is not necessarily reflected in other measures of security.

[c] Matthew Fuhrmann and Benjamin Tkach, "Almost Nuclear: Introducing the Nuclear Latency Dataset," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 32, No. 4, January 2015, pp. 443–461. This metric reflects whether states had the technical and industrial capacity to produce a nuclear weapon, and not whether they had actually constructed any bombs. Thirty-one different countries have had this capability at different times since 1945, in comparison with the relative handful of declared nuclear weapons states.

Table 3.5—Continued

Category	Proposed Relationship	Variable	Data Source
		Size of U.S. military, lagged	NMC data
Relationship between the United States and the state experiencing the war	Close ties with the United States increase the likelihood of U.S. intervention	Geographic proximity	Minimum distance data
		Importance of bilateral trade to the U.S. economy	Barbieri trade data; Maddison/World Bank GDP data
		Mutual defensive alliance	COW alliance data
		Prior U.S. military assistance	Greenbook data
		Prior U.S. economic assistance	Greenbook data
		Diaspora in the United States	RAND-collected diaspora data from U.S. census

NOTE: Data covered the years 1946 to 2014 wherever possible.

Results

Two factors in particular appear to be associated with a greater likelihood that the United States will conduct a deterrent intervention: a close prior relationship between the potential host country and the United States (as measured by a mutual defensive alliance or the amount of prior U.S. military assistance) and the prior year's rate of U.S. economic growth. For context, a mutual defensive alliance was associated with nearly a doubling in the likelihood of a U.S. deterrent intervention.[70] While we found the strongest evidence to support these two relationships, we also identified several others in which we had a more moderate degree of confidence. Three additional factors were associated with a greater likelihood of a U.S. deterrent intervention:

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[70] See Chapter Six for details.

the degree of the threat faced by the potential host (as measured by the index of potential threat characteristics discussed above), the amount of oil that the country produced, and greater U.S. relative capabilities (as measured by the degree of U.S. global hegemony). In addition, the wealth of the potential host (as measured by GDP per capita) was associated with a reduced likelihood of a deterrent intervention. These findings make intuitive sense. First, the U.S. is more likely to intervene to provide deterrence in cases of significant threats to close allies and is increasingly able to do this if the United States has greater relative capabilities. The significance of the oil production variable may be evidence that deterrence decisions are often driven by U.S. strategic interests more generally, although it is worth emphasizing that U.S. armed combat and stability operation interventions are not more likely in oil producing countries. These findings are summarized in Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5
Factors Affecting the Likelihood of U.S. Deterrence Interventions

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-3.5*
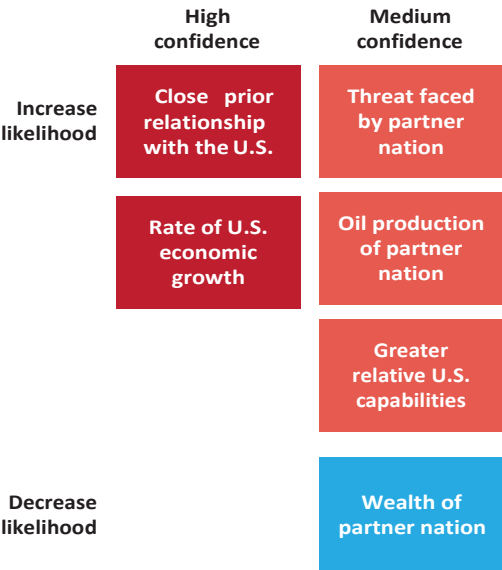
Our models assessing the size of U.S. deterrent interventions identified several of the same variables as did the models assessing their likelihood, although they did not always operate in the same direction. A close prior relationship with the United States (as measured by a mutual defensive alliance) and the degree of threat faced by the potential host (as measured by being the target of a high salience territorial dispute) were clearly associated with larger deterrent interventions. So, too, was the wealth of the potential host (as measured by GDP per capita), in contrast to its negative relationship with the likelihood of a deterrent intervention. So, wealthier states may be less likely to become hosts to a U.S. deterrent intervention, but when they do those interventions tend to be larger. This may be the result of geographic clustering of wealthy U.S. allies in Europe, where large deterrent deployments in Germany can effectively help to deter aggression against other NATO allies without the need to have troops in each ally.

We had a more moderate degree of confidence in two additional factors that appear to be associated with larger deterrent interventions: the rate of U.S. economic growth in the prior year, and the overall size of the U.S. military. There were also two factors in which we had a similar degree of confidence that were associated with smaller deterrent interventions: the overall level of U.S. military expenditures, and the amount of oil produced by the potential host. The findings are summarized in Figure 3.6.

Summary and Implications

The diversity of the results across our three models highlights the importance of assessing different types of U.S. interventions separately. While there are some factors that have relatively consistent effects across all of our models, such as close ties with the United States making an intervention more likely, a great many others vary by model. Territorial disputes may help to identify potential hosts for deterrent interventions, for example, while providing no information regarding whether a stability operation was more likely. Efforts to identify a single set of factors that would be applicable for any type of intervention would

Figure 3.6
Factors Affecting the Size of U.S. Deterrence Interventions

	High confidence	Medium confidence
Increase size	Close prior relationship with the U.S.	Rate of U.S. economic growth
	Threat faced by partner nation	Size of U.S. military
	Wealth of partner nation	
Decrease size		U.S. military expenditures
		Oil production of partner nation
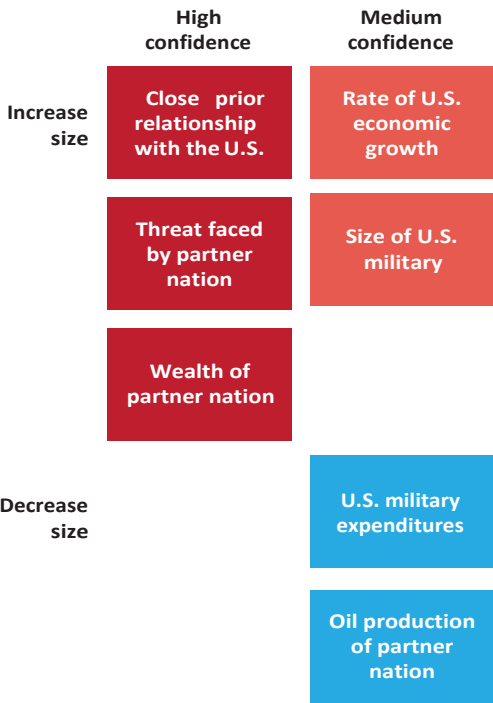
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-3.6*

therefore likely miss out on many opportunities to construct more nuanced signposts.

War weariness provides a good example of a factor that may be very useful for understanding U.S. intervention behavior, but that needs to be understood in context. Our results support the contention that a recent, negative, and costly intervention experience can make the United States less likely to intervene in armed conflicts, and to intervene with smaller forces when it does so.[71] However, war weariness

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[71] Moreover, our analysis suggests that this effect persists for roughly nine years, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven.

did not appear to have an effect on the likelihood of stability operations. In addition, while non-deterrent interventions did decline after Vietnam, deterrent interventions remained persistent throughout most of the Cold War period. So, while war weariness may well indicate a temporary reduction in the likelihood of one type of U.S. intervention, it may have no effect on others, making its overall effect on the demand for U.S. forces more limited. This is particularly relevant in today's context, following the costly interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. A common argument is that the country, both the public and its leaders, has little appetite for new military interventions and as such, cuts in defense spending or the size of the military are not worrisome. Our results show instead that even a decline in the likelihood of new interventions into armed conflicts may not mean a significant drop in the number of ongoing interventions overall.

Another key insight that emerges from our analysis is about factors that do not appear relevant, at least according to our analysis, to the likelihood of interventions, despite the common conception that they do matter. Although our case studies will describe the ways in which domestic and elite opinion may contribute to the likelihood of interventions, our statistical analysis found little evidence for an association between domestic politics and military interventions. Those who argue interventions are more likely under specific Presidents or with specific types of legislative compositions, then, may need to revise their expectations about the importance of these factors.[72] There is also little evidence that the number of wars or conflicts going on in the world has any effect on the likelihood of military interventions. This is another important finding in today's context. Many practitioners and policymakers have expressed concern about the recent uptick in the incidence of conflict because they believe it may mean an associated increase in the number of U.S. interventions. While there is no guarantee that this will not occur, there is little evidence in our analysis that would

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[72] We also conducted a further robustness check utilizing dummy variables for different presidential administrations in lieu of the half-decade dummy control variables used in some of our models. None of these presidential administration variables were statistically significant in the models explored, while the other relationships identified all remained statistically significant.

support such an argument overall. Instead, it is the locations of conflicts and the specific states affected that is more relevant to consider. Finally, other demands on U.S. forces also do not seem to affect the likelihood of U.S. military interventions. This suggests that while there may be resource constraints on the number of interventions that the United States can complete at one time, the fact that the United States has several ongoing interventions at any one point does not mean that the country will not initiate a new intervention. The related question of overlapping interventions and whether interventions are likely to occur in bunches or clusters is considered in more detail in Chapter Four.

The factors that we identified in this chapter as being closely related to the likelihood and size of different types of U.S. interventions are based on historical data. However, as already discussed, these factors may be useful not only for explaining past patterns of intervention, but may also be useful as future signposts. While future drivers of U.S. interventions could certainly change from those that came before, the factors we have identified are based on an analysis of a fairly wide range of historical contexts, from the relatively isolationist pre-World War II era, to the Cold War period, to the most recent, more interventionist period as well.[73] These factors are therefore more likely to reflect enduring U.S. interests or mechanisms that may make U.S. intervention more likely. As such, they are also likely to be useful as signposts for analysts and policymakers seeking to anticipate when future U.S. interventions may become more likely. Chapter Six will present our detailed efforts to operationalize these factors, as well as others identified by the case studies presented in Chapter Five, as signposts.

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[73] We cannot consider each of these periods separately due to the number of observations. However, we did include controls for the degree of U.S. global hegemony, which fluctuates roughly in accordance with these periods, and should account for some of the variation that might occur from systematic differences across these periods.

Clustering

In the previous chapter, we highlighted those characteristics of the United States, the target state, and the international system that may contribute to the likelihood and size of U.S. military interventions. However, one question we have not yet considered in depth is whether the presence of a previous U.S. intervention in a given country or region might, in fact, increase the likelihood of a subsequent intervention in a nearby country. The question of intervention clustering is an important one for military planners. If interventions are likely to occur in clusters, then their demands in terms of personnel and financial cost are also likely to aggregate, with implications for force requirements and resource decisions. In this chapter, we explore this issue of intervention clustering in more detail and provide insight into the likelihood, drivers, and implications of clustering.

What Is Intervention Clustering?

The assumption in many DoD planning documents is that U.S. military interventions are essentially independent events. Under this assumption, the fact that the United States has started one intervention does not affect the likelihood that another intervention will occur in the near future or in a nearby location. If interventions are truly independent events, then their occurrence should be evenly distributed geographically and over time. However, there are many reasons to believe that interventions might not be independent and might instead occur in clusters in both space and time. By "intervention clusters," we mean

groups of interventions that occur in the same geographic area and around the same time. Intervention clusters often include overlapping interventions, but may also be made up of interventions to occur one or two or even five years apart, but in the same geographic area. In some cases, these clusters of interventions may be causally related (e.g., a first intervention causes a second), while in others, a cluster may be caused by a common problem or the spillover of a conflict. Understanding whether or not ground interventions occur in clusters may be important for Army planners for two reasons. First, temporal clusters, when interventions occur clustered in time, may lead to aggregated demands that can place stress on military resources and personnel. Second, a finding that interventions occur in spatial clusters may provide insight into specific regions of the world that are more or less likely to have ongoing interventions.

A Look at the Data

As a starting point, it is useful to look at the distribution of U.S. interventions over time and space to see if there appears to be evidence of a clustering pattern, at least anecdotally. Figure 4.1 shows a timeline of select U.S. ground interventions with interventions in the same region depicted in the same color to highlight geographic and temporal clusters. The vertical axis measures the maximum number of troops involved in each intervention. A number of key observations emerge from this illustration. First, there does appear to be significant evidence of clustering in Central America in the early 1900s through about 1920, World War I and World War II and their post-conflict stabilizations, Vietnam and its associated interventions, interventions in the Persian Gulf in the 1990s and 2000s, and Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s. Second, interventions of all sizes appear to be involved in intervention clusters. Interventions as large as World War II and Vietnam (100,000 or more troops) and as small as those in Laos, Cuba, and Haiti (1,000 or fewer troops) appear to be involved in clusters according to the figure below. Relatedly, it is worth noting that clusters can include either a mix of large and smaller interventions or a smaller number of large interven-

Figure 4.1
Selected Intervention Clusters by Region and Size
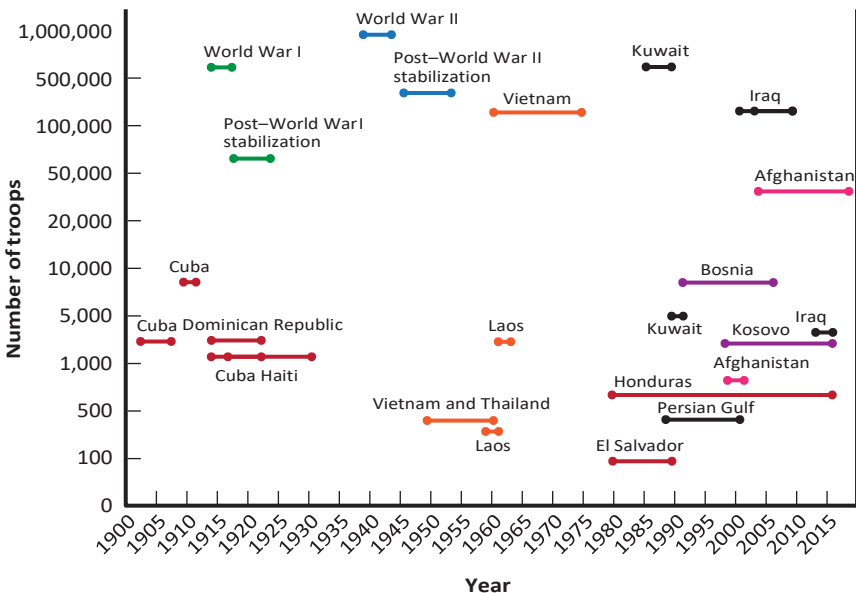
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

tions or a greater number of small interventions. Third, the intervention clusters highlighted in this chart occur in areas of high strategic importance to the United States, including Central America, Southeast Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

However, while this graph shows some anecdotal evidence of intervention clustering, it does not explain why interventions might cluster or present any systematic evidence that interventions are likely to occur in clusters.

Why Would Interventions Cluster? A Review of Existing Literature

There is little existing literature exploring the possibility that interventions might occur in space-time clusters. However, there is related

literature on spatial and temporal clusters of conflict that has clear parallels and even implications for the analysis presented in this chapter. Literature on contagion of intrastate conflicts consistently finds that internal wars do, in fact, cluster in space and time.[1] The literature identifies several possible drivers of this clustering, including increased exposure to proximate conflicts and the risk of "copycat" violence; ties between an ethnic group in a nearby warring states and state governments that exacerbate internal tensions; economic or social strains (e.g., diffusion of fighters, weapons, refugees, and funds across borders) created by a nearby conflict which trigger internal pressures in neighboring states;[2] and "bad neighborhood effects," where a set of underlying conditions shared by a number of states lead to unrelated but proximate conflicts in many states.[3]

A more limited body of work considers the possible diffusion of interstate conflict. In general this work also finds evidence for conflict

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[1]   Luc Anselin and John O'Loughlin, "Geography of International Conflict and Cooperation: Spatial Dependence and Regional Context in Africa," in Michael D. Ward, ed., *The New Geopolitics*, Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge, 1992; Daniel C. Esty, Jack A. Goldstone, Ted R. Gurr, Pamela Surko, and Alan N. Unger, *State Failure Task Force Report*, McLean, Va.: Science Applications International, 1995; Stuart Hill and Donald Rothchild, "The Contagion of Political Conflict in Africa and the World," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 30, No. 4, 1986, pp. 716–735; Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr, "Diffusion, Reinforcement, Geo-Politics and the Spread of War," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 74, No. 4, 1980, pp. 932–946; Nicholas Sambanis, "Do Ethnic and Nonethnic Civil Wars Have the Same Causes? A Theoretical and Empirical Inquiry (Part 1)," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 45, No. 3, 2001, pp. 259–282; Harvey Starr and Benjamin A. Most, "Contagion and Border Effects on Contemporary African Conflict," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1983, pp. 92–117; Michael D. Ward and Kristian S. Gleditsch, "Location, Location, Location: An MCMC Approach to Modeling the Spatial Context of War and Peace," *Political Analysis*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 2000, pp. 244–260.

[2]   Halvard Buhaug and Kristian S. Gleditsch, "Contagion or Confusion? Why Conflicts Cluster in Space," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 2, 2008, pp. 215–233; Ward and Gleditsch, 2002.

[3]   Buhaug and Gleditsch, 2008; Håvard Hegre, Tanja Ellingsen, Scott Gates, and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Toward a Democratic Civil Peace? Democracy, Political Change, and Civil War, 1816–1992," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 95, No. 1, 2001, pp. 33–48; Gary King, "Why Context Should Not Count," *Political Geography*, Vol. 15. No. 2, 1996, pp. 159–164.

diffusion.[4] The mechanisms through which this diffusion occurs are somewhat less clear than for intrastate conflict, but they include possible linkages between factions in one country and nearby state governments.[5] Alliances are another possible driver of the diffusion of interstate conflict as are increasingly cross-national flows of money, personnel, and trade.[6] Finally, there is some evidence that ongoing wars between two states can weaken one or both states and lead nearby states to seek to achieve their objectives by force.[7] Importantly, most existing work on interstate conflict diffusion finds that this effect is strongest within specific regions, rather than stretching more globally.[8]

There is also some work on temporal clustering of conflict. For example, historical analysis of trends in international conflict and political instability often points out that conflict tends to move in a wave-like pattern, with a period of increasing, overlapping conflicts followed by a general decline in conflict.[9] While recent trends in conflict suggest a more general, sustained decline in conflict since the end of the Cold War, there has recently been a slight uptick in conflict over the past two years, according to databases that track conflict, including the UCDP

[4]   Benjamin A. Most, Harvey Starr, and Randolph M. Siverson, "The Logic and Study of the Diffusion of International Conflict," in Manus I. Midlarsky, ed., *Handbook of War Studies*, Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989; Randolph M. Siverson and Harvey Starr, *The Diffusion of War: A Study of Opportunity and Willingness*, Ann Arbor, Mich.: The University of Michigan Press, 1991.

[5]   Alan Dowty, "Foreign-Linked Factionalism as a Historical Pattern," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 15, No. 4, 1971, pp. 429–442.

[6]   Matts Hammarström, "The Diffusion of Military Conflict: Central and South-East Europe in 1919–20 and 1991–92," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 31, August 1994, pp. 263–280.

[7]   Henk Houweling and Jan G. Siccama, *Studies of War*, Dordrecht, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1988.

[8]   Hammarström, 1994.

[9]   Edward Mansfield, "The Distribution of Wars over Time," *World Politics*, Vol. 41, No. 1, October 1988, pp. 21–51; Brian Pollins, "Global Political Order, Economic Change, and Armed Conflict: Coevolving Systems and the Use of Force," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 90, No. 1, March 1996, pp. 103–117.

data mentioned in the previous chapter.[10] Even if this uptick does not continue, the spate of new conflicts for the years 2013–2015 could fit within this general pattern. General systemic factors such as trends in macroeconomics or youth bulges may explain this overall pattern in conflict occurrence. However, it is also possible that the drivers of conflict diffusion noted above, for example economic and social strains or neighborhood effects, may also create a surge in the number of conflicts in a given region at a specific time, leading to clusters not only in space or only in time, but in both.

A final important note is that literature on conflict recurrence consistently finds that countries that have experienced war in the past, both intrastate conflict and interstate conflict, are likely to experience a recurrence of this conflict in the future.[11] Many factors may influence this likelihood of recurrence, including the type of settlement, the presence of mediators, the nature of the conflict (e.g., territorial, enduring rivals), and the outcome of the initial dispute.[12] Recurring conflicts are a different type of conflict diffusion than contagion that spreads conflict to other countries, but are equally important to understanding

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[10] Nils Petter Gleditsch, Peter Wallensteen, Mikael Eriksson, Margareta Sollenberg, and Håvard Strand, "Armed Conflict 1946–2001: A New Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 39, No. 5, September 2002, pp. 615–637.

[11] J. Michael Quinn, T. David Mason, and Mehmet Gurses, "Sustaining the Peace: Determinants of Civil War Recurrence," *International Interactions*, Vol. 33, No. 2, 2007, pp. 167–193.

[12] See, for example, Paul F. Diehl and Gary Goertz, *War and Peace in International Rivalry*, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 2000; Scott S. Gartner and Jacob Bercovitch, "Overcoming Obstacles to Peace: The Contribution of Short-Lived Conflict Settlements," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 4, December 2006, pp. 819–840; Joseph M. Grieco, "Repetitive Military Challenges and Recurrent International Conflicts, 1918–1994," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 45, No. 2, June 2001, pp. 295–316; Paul R. Hensel, "One Thing Leads to Another: Recurrent Militarized Disputes in Latin America, 1816–1986," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 31, No. 3, August 1994, pp. 281–297; Stephen L. Quackenbush and Jerome Venteicher, "Settlements, Outcomes, and the Recurrence of Conflict," *Journal of Peace Research*, November 2008, pp. 723–742; Harrison R. Wagner, "The Causes of Peace," in Roy Licklider, ed., *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End*, New York: New York University Press, 1993, pp. 235–268; Paul D. Senese and Stephen Quackenbush, "Geographical Proximity and Issue Salience," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1996, pp. 133–161.

why conflicts may occur in cluster patterns and to exploring whether interventions may also occur in clusters.

Evidence that conflicts cluster in time and space suggests the possibility that interventions into these conflicts may also cluster in time and space. Since interventions are typically reactions to some crisis or event or an attempt to prevent a conflict or crisis, it makes intuitive sense that if conflicts are likely to diffuse and occur in clusters, so may subsequent interventions. Of course, this pattern is not guaranteed. The United States certainly does not intervene in every conflict and as noted in the previous chapter, there is no direct evidence that the number or location of global conflicts is a key driver of the number or location of U.S. interventions. However, there is some evidence from previous work that U.S. military interventions do, in fact, often occur in clusters. Specifically, Kavanagh, using a dataset of U.S. ground interventions in the period 1949 to 2009, found evidence that interventions do occur in clusters even controlling for factors such as time period and the number of ongoing conflicts. Furthermore, there is also evidence that the United States is more likely to intervene in a country that it has already intervened in previously, a fact that may also contribute to clustering of interventions. However, this earlier work did not investigate the effects of intervention size on clustering or explore empirically the possible mechanisms through which clustering may occur. The analysis in this chapter builds off this earlier work, using the expanded set of interventions included in the RUGID data. Before turning to the empirical analysis, we first lay out some possible mechanisms for intervention clustering that we will explore in more depth throughout the chapter.

Mechanisms of Intervention Clustering

Intervention clustering may occur through a number of different mechanisms. First, one intervention may lead to another if the first intervention is not fully completed. The *incompletion mechanism* results when the United States does not fully accomplish its intervention objectives or leaves critical political, economic, or social issues unresolved. Iraq in

1991 and 2003 would be an example. The decision to allow Saddam Hussein to remain in power after the first Gulf War contributed to tense and acrimonious relations between the United States and Iraq throughout the 1990s until the U.S. decision to intervene a second time in 2003. Importantly, the incompletion mechanism is likely to lead to repeat interventions in a single country or a set of countries.

Second, one intervention may lead to a subsequent intervention to stabilize the outcome of the first. In *stabilization*, an initial combat intervention results in a second stabilization intervention. Once again, this mechanism represents a causal relationship as the first intervention necessitates the second. An example would be recent operations in Afghanistan, which had an initial combat phase followed by a lengthy stabilization operation. It is worth noting that very often the second stabilization intervention lasts significantly longer than the first combat intervention. Stabilization is likely to lead to repeat interventions in the same country or set of countries.

Third, one intervention may lead to another if the conflict or political instability in one country spills across borders and leads to additional interventions into nearby countries. In *conflict diffusion*, it is the diffusion of the conflict itself that leads to multiple interventions. An example would be the U.S. intervention in Bosnia followed by its intervention in Kosovo. In this case, the conflict that occurred in Bosnia awakened similar ethnic tensions nearby and led to conflict in Kosovo that ultimately triggered another U.S. intervention.

The final mechanism is *buttressing*, in which one intervention leads to other interventions in nearby countries to help support and ensure the completion of the initial intervention. An example of this would be the U.S. intervention in Cambodia and Thailand to support the intervention in Vietnam. The relationship between these interventions is causal, as it is the first intervention and its demands that directly lead to the subsequent interventions.

While the different mechanisms all result in similar outcomes, specifically a cluster of interventions, each has very different implications for Army planners and strategists. If clustering is driven primarily by incompletion, then ensuring that the intervention objectives are fully completed and that all loose ends are tied up before withdrawal

must be a priority. However, it is also worth noting that the incompletion mechanism may lead to clustering, but not to overlapping interventions (since incompletion implies a first, incomplete intervention followed by a second). As a result, its implications on the demand for manpower and resources will be different than those created by other mechanisms, such as buttressing, which do lead to overlapping interventions. However, if clustering is driven primarily by diffusion of the initial conflict, then following an intervention into armed conflict, the focus should be on preventing spillover of that initial conflict. In the statistical analysis below, we try to disentangle the different mechanisms to explain why interventions appear to cluster and what this might mean for Army planners. However, it is worth noting that our effort to disentangle the mechanisms will be challenging due to the nature of the data and the fact that several mechanisms operate simultaneously to produce a clustering outcome. It will be even more difficult to establish causal relationships between interventions to prove that clustering is indeed evidence that one intervention causes another.

Approach

To identify the likelihood and effect of clustering on intervention frequency we conducted a statistical analysis using the RUGID dataset. We use logit models in which each observation is a country year.[13] In the analysis, we include all country years in the international system in the period 1900 to 2014. The dependent variable is a dichotomous variable, taking the value of "1" when there is a least one intervention in a given year. There are three key independent variables of interest for the clustering analysis. First, the "previous intervention" variable takes a value of "1" if the United States has previously intervened in a given country within the past ten years. Second, the "nearby intervention" variable that takes a value of "1" if there is at least one ongoing

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[13] Logit models are designed specifically to deal with cases where the dependent variable is dichotomous, taking the values of 0 and 1. For more on logit regressions, see William H. Greene, *Econometric Analysis*, 7th ed., New York: Pearson, 2011.

intervention within 1,000 km of the country within the past five years. Third, the "maximum troops" variable measures the size of the largest recent, nearby intervention (within five years and 1,000 km). If clustering does exist, then we would expect to find a relationship between the likelihood of an intervention in any given year and the existence of a previous intervention in the same country in the past ten years and/or the existence of recent, nearby interventions. If the size of nearby interventions affects the likelihood of clustering, then we should find a relationship between the likelihood of an intervention and the size of recent, nearby interventions.

In addition to these key variables, we also explored a number of control variables hypothesized to be associated with the likelihood of a U.S. intervention. These include *wealth of the target state* measured as GDP per capita; *regime type of the target state* measured by the polity score from the Polity IV dataset; and *relationship between the United States and the target state* as measured by whether the United States has a defensive alliance with the target state.[14] Also included was a control variable for the Cold War, which takes a value of "1" in the years from 1946 to 1989.[15] We tested a number of characteristics of the United States that might be relevant to the likelihood of interventions (such as *U.S. GDP growth, presidential administration, years to next presidential administration, overall U.S. troops deployed*, and *total ongoing U.S. interventions*).[16] In general, these control variables did not significantly affect the substantive results and significantly reduce the number of observations included in the regression. Only the alliance variable was consistently statistically significant, increasing the likelihood of a U.S. intervention as expected. Therefore, the final models excluded these control variables to focus on the substantive, clustering effect.

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[14] Klare, 1981; Pearson and Baumann, 1977; Yoon, 1997.

[15] Brands, 1988; James and O'Neal, 1991.

[16] See, for example, James Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 3, 1994, pp. 577–592; Meernik, 1994; Ostrom Jr. and Job, 1986; Meernik, 1996.

Results[17]

The results of the statistical analysis suggest that clustering is driven by all four of the mechanisms discussed previously, although evidence for the incompletion and stabilization mechanisms is somewhat stronger than that for buttressing and conflict diffusion.

The first key result is that the likelihood of an intervention in a given country is significantly greater if the United States has intervened in that country in the past ten years. As shown in Figure 4.2, the likelihood of an intervention in a given country increases from 0.1 percent to 12 percent when the United States has already intervened in the country in the past ten years. This type of repeat intervention is driven primarily by the incompletion mechanism, instances where the initial intervention objectives are not completed requiring a subsequent reintervention by U.S. forces. The stabilization mechanism, where the

Figure 4.2
Effect of Recent Interventions in the Same Country on Likelihood of a New Intervention Initiation
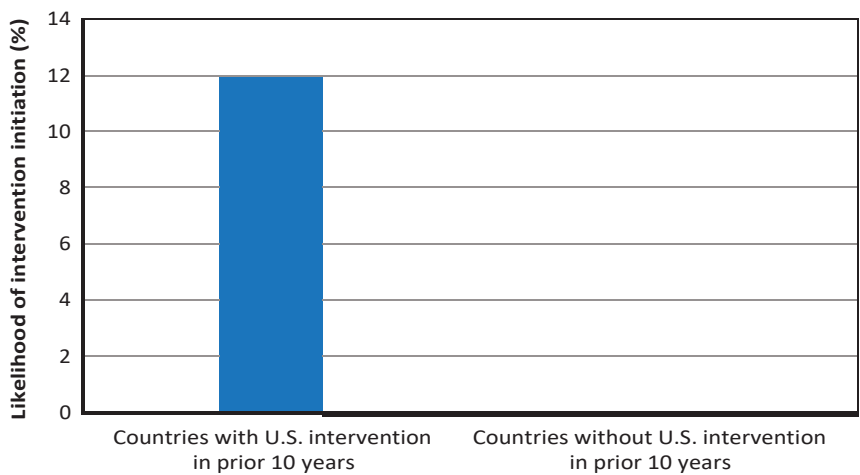
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
RAND RR1831A-4.2

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[17] We include regression tables in Appendix D.

United States remains in a country to conduct peacekeeping, advisory activities, or stabilization after a combat intervention, also plays a role.

The second key result is that the likelihood of an intervention in a given country also increases when there have been other, nearby interventions (within 1,000 km) in the past five years. This includes both ongoing interventions as well as interventions that may have ended within the last five years. The size of this effect depends entirely on the size of these recent, nearby interventions. In addition, the effect of recent nearby interventions is additive to that of U.S. interventions that have occurred in the same country in the past ten years. In Figure 4.3, the independent effect of recent nearby interventions, over and above the effect of past interventions in the same country is repre-

Figure 4.3
Effect of Recent Nearby Interventions and Largest Nearby Intervention on Likelihood of New U.S. Intervention in Countries with Prior U.S. Intervention
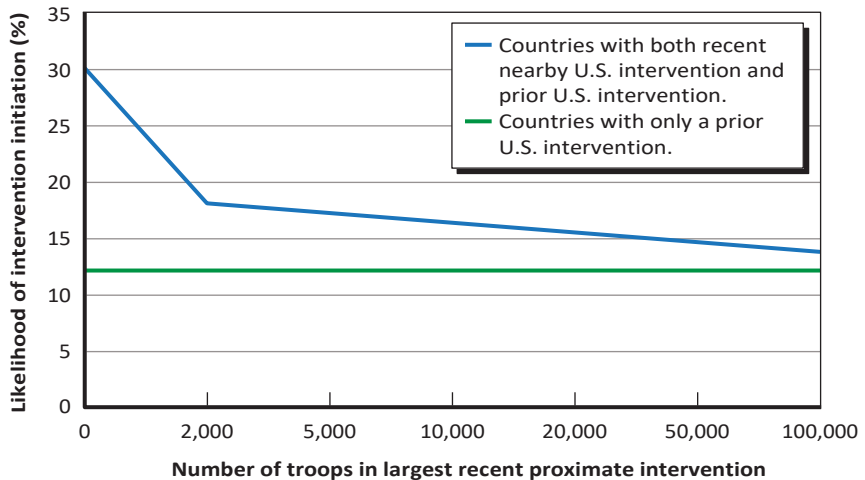
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
NOTE: Recent proximate interventions are interventions within 1,000 km in the five years prior. Prior U.S. interventions include only interventions in 10 years prior.
NOTE: Differences between countries with only a prior U.S. intervention and those with both recent nearby and prior interventions is statistically significant at 0.01 level. See Appendix D for detailed regression results.
RAND RR1831A-4.3

sented by the space between the dotted green line and the blue line. This analysis focuses on those countries where the United States has intervened in the past and shows that the likelihood of a new intervention increases further when there have been recent interventions in nearby countries. This increase is most significant when the largest recent nearby intervention is relatively small. The effect decreases as the nearby invention becomes increasingly large in size. For example, when the largest recent or ongoing nearby intervention has 2,000 troops, the likelihood of a new intervention is about 18 percent. When the largest nearby intervention has 20,000 troops, the likelihood of a new intervention is about 15 percent. As the number of troops in the largest nearby recent intervention increases further, this percentage falls toward 12 percent. Importantly, while the effect of recent nearby interventions on the likelihood of new interventions holds for both countries where the United States has intervened in past ten years, and countries where it has not intervened in the past ten years, it is significantly more sizeable and substantively meaningful for the former group of countries. Figure 4.4 shows a similar graph for countries where the United States has not intervened in the past. While the probability of a new intervention remains much lower in these instances, nearby proximate interventions still appear to induce a clustering pattern in these cases. The effect of recent nearby interventions on new interventions is evidence of conflict diffusion, where the conflict itself diffuses, requiring additional interventions, as well as buttressing, when ongoing interventions require additional interventions to support their achievement of key objectives. A closer review of cases in the dataset suggests that both mechanisms are at work in driving the clustering results observed here, but the statistical analysis cannot disentangle the two.

The fact that the likelihood of a new intervention is greater when recent nearby interventions are smaller could have several possible drivers. First, it may be that smaller interventions are more likely to require additional buttressing or supportive interventions. Second, it may be that when recent nearby interventions are large, the ability of the United States to launch new interventions is limited by resource constraints. Finally, war weariness and public opinion, both discussed in Chapter Three, could also affect decisions about the size of subsequent

Figure 4.4
Effect of Recent Nearby Interventions and Largest Nearby Intervention
on Likelihood of New U.S. Intervention in Countries Without Prior U.S.
Intervention
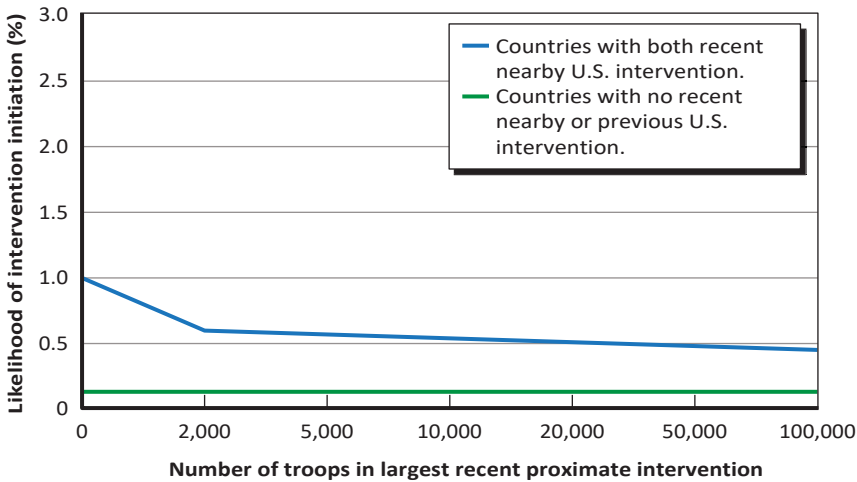
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
NOTES: Recent proximate interventions are interventions within 1,000 km in the ive
years prior. Prior U.S. interventions include only interventions in ten years prior.
Differences between countries with recent nearby U.S. interventions and those
without any recent nearby or previous U.S. interventions is statistically signiicant
at the 0.01 level.
RAND *RR1831A-4.4*

interventions. We cannot entirely disentangle these two effects in these
models, however, and it is likely that both are at play in the results
observed here.

The analysis above suggests that interventions do tend to occur
in clusters in space and time and that clustering is more likely when
the initial, recent or ongoing interventions in a given region are rela-
tively small. We also looked into the likely size of subsequent or follow-
on interventions, by which we mean those interventions that occur
after an initial recent or ongoing nearby intervention or after a previ-
ous intervention in the same country, creating the intervention cluster.
Figure 4.5 shows that these follow-on interventions tend to be larger,
specifically that they are more likely to have more than 20,000 troops

Figure 4.5
**Effect of Recent Proximate Interventions on the Probability of New U.S.
Large and Small Military Interventions in Countries Where the United
States Has Previously Intervened**
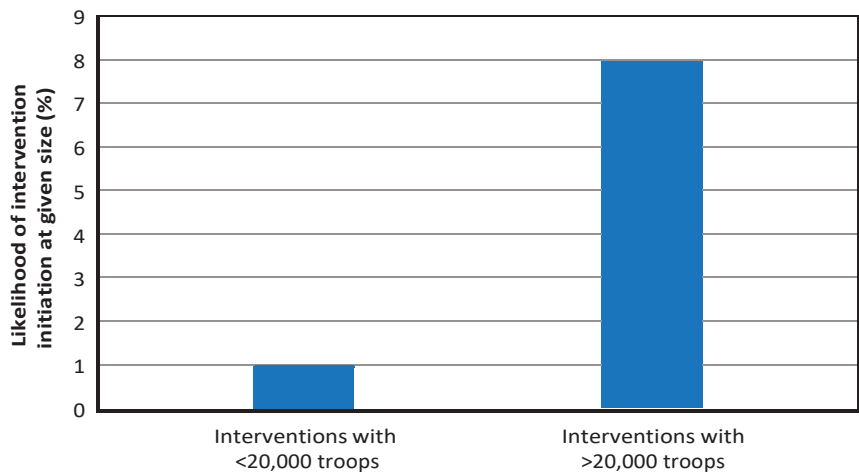
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
NOTE: Proximate interventions are ongoing interventions within 1,000 km in the
five years prior to the initiation. Probability was calculated using average value for
ongoing intervention size and assuming previous U.S. intervention in target state.
RAND *RR1831A-4.5*

than less than 20,000 troops. This is an important observation from a
planning perspective. By its nature clustering creates strain on military
personnel and resources because it can lead to multiple simultaneous
and overlapping interventions. However, this result suggests that in
addition to the aggregation effect that clustering implies, clustering
may also place stress on personnel and resources because the follow-on
interventions involved in clusters tend to be larger.

Summary and Implications

To summarize, the analysis conducted here suggests that there is evi-
dence of a systematic tendency for U.S. military interventions to occur
in clusters. There appear to be two key drivers of this result. First, the

United States is much more likely to intervene in a country again after the first intervention. This can be interpreted as evidence of both the incompletion and stabilization mechanisms. In many cases, the United States intervenes in a country and then leaves before returning when the initial problem reemerges. In others, the U.S. military has conducted combat operations in a region followed later by stability operations in the same country. The United States is also more likely to intervene when there have been recent interventions in nearby countries. This effect is most significant when recent and ongoing interventions have been small, but the subsequent, follow-on interventions tend to be large. The effect of nearby recent and ongoing interventions is evidence of buttressing and conflict diffusion. Together, these two mechanisms, the effect of repeat interventions and recent nearby interventions, increase the likelihood that interventions will occur in space-time clusters.

While our results do appear to provide evidence of all four clustering mechanisms identified at the outset of the chapter, it is extremely difficult to establish causal relationships that might explain the clustering effect observed statistically. We can identify anecdotal examples where each of these mechanisms appears to be at work as well as examples of where one intervention really does appear to cause a subsequent one. In other cases, a cluster of interventions appears to respond to a single or set of concerns within a region. In addition, there are likely cases where a number of interventions occur in a space-time cluster but are largely unrelated. Further research, including in-depth qualitative analysis, will be required to more firmly establish the existence of causal relationships in intervention clusters. However, the results here do suggest that from an operational perspective, clustering of interventions is both an observable pattern and one that military planners may need to take into account as they consider initiating new interventions and planning the Army force structure required to meet future demands.

The finding that interventions are likely to cluster suggests a number of important policy implications. First, as noted previously, clusters of interventions have important manning implications because they result often in overlapping or simultaneous interventions along with an aggregation of resource and personnel requirements. Force

planners may need to consider the possibility for aggregating demands when constructing overall force plans as well as operation plans for potential future interventions. Second, the clustering effect observed in these analyses is relatively substantial: for a country that has had a previous intervention and recent nearby interventions, the likelihood of a subsequent intervention increases dramatically. This observation may serve as a signpost for military planners seeking to anticipate the areas of the world where future interventions are most likely. Specifically, planners may choose to focus their attention on countries where the United States has recently intervened and regions where the United States currently has troops or have recently completed interventions.

Other planning implications that emerge from the clustering pattern observed here have to do with the specific mechanisms explored in the analysis. First, the fact that incompletion appears to play such a large role in driving the clustering result underscores the importance of the completion and withdrawal phase of an intervention. A premature withdrawal or a failure to solve the challenge driving the initial intervention may lead to a subsequent, repeat intervention in the same country. Because clustering due to incompletion can place stress on the force, withdrawal decisions should be made carefully and the process conducted to minimize the risk of recurrence. Importantly, geographic clustering (without accompanying temporal clustering), such as that caused by repeat interventions and incompletion, does not place quite the same level of stress on military resources as temporal clustering because geographic clustering does not bring with it the same aggregation of force and equipment demands. However, incompletion of past interventions and the geographic clustering that it causes may lead to an overall increase in the number of future interventions that the United States will need to perform in the future. Second, the prevalence of stabilization as a mechanism driving repeat interventions highlights the fact that combat operations typically intended to be short often lead to stability operations which can last a long time. Finally, the tendency for conflicts and even interventions to diffuse across country borders also has policy and planning implications for policymaker decisions about where to intervene. Thinking through the implications of where a conflict might diffuse and what the implications for any

U.S. intervention would be (e.g., Would it also spread? Would buttressing be necessary?) could help avoid situations where the United States is unintentionally pulled into an intervention that later is forced to expand across borders or instances where conflict diffusion undermines any successes of the original U.S. intervention.

Case Studies

Why Use Case Studies? Purpose and Methodology

While the statistical analyses provide insight into the factors that increase the likelihood and size of different types of U.S. military interventions, they have some limitations. Most importantly, statistical models capture patterns and trends that are generally true across all interventions, but there may be interventions that deviate from this general pattern. This is especially true in the case of U.S. ground interventions, many of which occur for very specific and idiosyncratic reasons. Case studies can provide insight into these idiosyncrasies. Case studies can also explore questions that are only partially answered by statistical analyses, for example questions about the lead time that planners have when preparing for an intervention or the most common types of resource challenges and trade-offs faced. Finally, there are certain factors, such as domestic public support for an intervention, which we have a theoretic reason to expect may influence the decision by policymakers to intervene in a given conflict or crisis, but cannot include in the statistical analysis due to limited data availability.

In this chapter of the report, we focus on case studies of specific U.S. military interventions and the lessons that these cases can provide to Army planners and policymakers. We use our case studies to further explore a number of specific questions about U.S. ground interventions. First, we use the case studies to provide additional insight into key factors that may drive U.S. decisions about where and when to initiate ground interventions. Case studies will allow us to explore

whether or not the results of the statistical models seem to make sense when applied to actual cases, as well as to identify additional determinants of U.S. intervention decisions that the statistical analysis might not pick up. Second, we use the case studies to identify additional warning signs of U.S. ground interventions. While the statistical analysis provides some insight into warning signs and predictors of ground interventions, case studies can provide more information about how warning signs work in practice and which are more or less useful to military planners. Third, we use the case studies to explore how resource decisions and constraints factored into ground interventions, including particularly whether other ongoing interventions placed constraints on U.S. actions or the decision to terminate an intervention. This question of trade-offs across interventions is directly related to the discussion of clustering in the previous chapter. Fourth, we use case studies to explore the key objectives of U.S. ground interventions and how often those objectives change over time. This may have implications for the allocation and sufficiency of resources allocated to a given intervention. Finally, the case studies allow us to investigate the drivers of intervention duration and the reasons for the termination or withdrawal of U.S. forces.

We selected our case studies using three criteria. First, some cases were identified depending on whether they were relatively well or poorly predicted by the statistical models. The inclusion of well-predicted cases allow us to validate the statistical models, while the inclusion of poorly predicted cases allow us to explore factors and warning signs that are missing from the models.[1] Second, for some of

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[1] It is important to note the scale upon which specific interventions were assessed to be relatively well or poorly predicted varies from model to model. Thus, the predicted probability for deterrence interventions cannot be compared to that for armed conflict and stability operations interventions. First, looking at our deterrence intervention models, the models predicted a 1.2% probability of a U.S. deterrent intervention in Taiwan in 1951, making it relatively well predicted, in comparison with a 0.09% probability of such an intervention in Kuwait in 1991, making it very poorly predicted. The Baltics case was also relatively poorly predicted, with a predicted probability of 0.15%. These cases were included precisely for these reasons. For the armed conflict interventions, South Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan were selected primarily due to their size, importance, and degree of resource

the cases that were selected due to their performance in the statistical models, we expanded their scope to include earlier or later phases. For example, having decided to include the intervention in Somalia in 1992, an armed conflict intervention case, we expanded our consideration of the case to also include the post-conflict stability operations phase. This decision was made on pragmatic grounds, as it allowed us to expand the set of cases we could assess under available research resources. Third, we considered some cases explicitly on the grounds of their size and relative importance in the history of U.S. interventions, in order to assess the dynamics of resource limitations and strain that exist in these types of interventions and that would be difficult to assess using only cases that involved more limited efforts. These included the Korean War and Vietnam War cases. Table 5.1 below summarizes all of the cases that we selected.

This chapter provides a summary of the key insights and take-aways that emerge from our case studies, focusing on four key areas: lead time, duration, and withdrawal; resource demands and constraints; signposts and leading indicators of future interventions; and overarching lessons for the Army that emerge from our case studies. The full write-up of our case studies is provided in Appendix B.

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stress. We also used the statistical models of interventions in armed conflict to select cases, including the Dominican Republic case because it was relatively well-predicted (at 26.4%) and Somalia 1992 because it was relatively poorly predicted (at 5.5%). Finally, for stability operation interventions our models predicted a 2.4% probability of the initiation of a new stability operation intervention in Bosnia in 1992, in comparison with a 0.26% probability of such an intervention in Lebanon in 1982. The Somalia 1994 and South Korea 1953 stability operation cases were included primarily as continuations of previous phases of armed conflict interventions of interest. Many of these predicted probabilities, particularly in the deterrent intervention models, are quite low. It is worth keeping in mind that interventions are rare events, such that even relatively modest increases in their predicted probability can be meaningful.

Table 5.1
Cases Selected for Analysis

Intervention Type	Cases
Armed Conflict	Dominican Republic, 1965 South Korea, 1950 Vietnam, 1962* Somalia, 1992 Afghanistan, 2001*
Stability Operations	Bosnia, 1992 Somalia, 1994 South Korea, 1953 Lebanon, 1982
Deterrence	Taiwan, 1951 Kuwait, 1991 Baltics, 2014

*Case included in our summary analysis only. Appendix B provides more detailed summaries of each case, with the exception of these two, which RAND has studied extensively in the past. (See J. A. Farmer, *Counterinsurgency, Vietnam, 1962–1963*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, P-2778, 1978; Mai Elliott, *RAND in Southeast Asia: A History of the Vietnam War Era*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, CP-564-RC, 2010; Melvin Gurtov, *Southeast Asia after Withdrawal from Vietnam*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, P-4413, 2010, for RAND work on Vietnam. See Stephen Watts and Sean Mann, *Determining U.S. Commitments in Afghanistan*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, EP-51175, 2015; David Thaler, Theodore W. Karasik, Dalia Dassa Kaye, Jennifer D. P. Moroney, Frederic Wehrey, Obaid Younossi, Farhana Ali, and Robert A. Guffey, *Future U.S. Security Relationships with Iraq and Afghanistan*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-6810-AF, 2008; Timothy M. Bonds, Dave Baiocchi, and Laurie McDonald, *Army Deployments to OIF and OEF*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, DB-587-A, 2010, for RAND work on Afghanistan.)

Case Study Insights and Takeaways

Lead Time, Duration, and Withdrawal

Each of the case studies provides some information about intervention lead time, duration, and withdrawal. Table 5.2 summarizes this information for each of the case studies.[2] A number of observations are

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[2] James F. Schnabel, *United States Army in the Korean War: Policy and Direction: The First Year*, US Army, Center of Military History, 1992, pp. 210–214; Graham A. Cosmas, *MACV: The Joint Command in the Years of Escalation, 1962–1967*, Washington, D.C.: United States Army Center for Military History, 2006, pp. 79–80; Donald Wright, James R. Bird, Steven

striking. First, in almost every case, the amount of lead time that the Army had to prepare for the intervention was very limited, creating challenges for military planners and logistics personnel who had to rapidly mobilize large numbers of U.S. forces and equipment. The reasons for the lack of lead time varied across cases. In some instances, the event that triggered the intervention was unexpected and the intervention a significant surprise. In others, however, there appear to have been early warning indicators that might have allowed planners to better anticipate the likelihood of a coming U.S. intervention. These warning signs were either ignored or not identified as potentially predicting the likelihood of a future intervention. For example, in the case of Operation Power Pack in the Dominican Republic, the intense U.S.

E. Clay, Peter W. Connors, LTC Scott C. Farquhar, Lynne Chandler Garcia, and Dennis F. Van Wey, *A Different Kind of War: The United States Army in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), October 2001–September 2005*, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2010, pp. 46–47, 183, 319–320; Robert F. Baumann and Lawrence A. Yates, *My Clan Against the World: US and Coalition Forces in Somalia 1992–1994*, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2015, p. 36; Walter S. Poole, *The Effort to Save Somalia*, Washington, D.C.: Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2005, pp. 25, 33; United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, p. 194; Lindesay Parrot, "Truce Is Signed, Ending the Fighting in Korea; P.O.W. Exchange Near; Rhee Gets U.S. Pledge; Eisenhower Bids Free World Stay Vigilant," *New York Times*, July 27, 1951; Yale Law School, Lillian Goldman Law Library, *Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea; October 1, 1953*, The Avalon Project, 2008; Ronald Reagan, "Remarks to Reporters Announcing the Deployment of United States Forces in Beirut, Lebanon," *The American Presidency Project*, August 20, 1982; Ralph A. Hallenbeck, *Military Force as an Instrument of U.S. Foreign Policy: Intervention in Lebanon, August 1982–February 1984*, New York: Praeger, 1991, pp. 14–15; Federal Acquisition Service (FAS), Intelligence Resource Program, *Report of the DOD Commission on Beirut International Airport Terrorist Act, October 23, 1983*, December 20, 1983, p. 39; Michael P. Mahaney, *Striking a Balance: Force Protection and Military Presence, Beirut, October 1983*, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, 2001, pp. 16–17; Lawrence Freedman, *A Choice of Enemies: America Confronts the Middle East*, New York: Public Affairs, 2008, p. 134; Mount Holyyoke College, *Statement of Secretary of Defense William J. Perry On the Deployment of U.S. Troops with the Bosnia Peace Implementation Force*, November 30, 1995; Christopher Cox, "Embracing Milosevic, Iranians Hasn't Worked: Clinton's Broken Promise Signals Failure in Bosnia," *Federation of American Scientists*, August 7, 1996; CNN, "Transcript of President Clinton's Speech on Bosnia," November 27, 1995; Gary Dempsey, "Rethinking the Dayton Agreement: Bosnia Three Years Later," *Policy Analysis*, No. 327, December 14, 1998; U.S. European Command, "Operation Atlantic Resolve—Fact Sheet 2016," April 15, 2016.

fear of spreading communism and a U.S. history of interventions in Central America and several years of political instability in the country might have served as a warning to planners that a U.S. intervention in the country was certainly a possibility in the event of a worsening political situation. Similarly, given the U.S. involvement in the Gulf War and the strategic importance of the Middle East, the decision to maintain a continued U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf should have been at least somewhat expected. Instead, the realization that there was a need for a long-term deterrent intervention in the Persian Gulf in the 1990s emerged only after the Gulf War ended. While it is certainly true many warning signs of coming interventions are likely to be much more noticeable in hindsight, it is also the case that a heightened attention to and awareness of these indicators might have provided planners with some additional indication that an intervention might be likely. In a subsequent section and in the next chapter, we will return to the importance of warning signs and try to provide additional insight into the types of metrics and signposts that planners and strategists may choose to monitor or track in order to gain more advance warning of coming interventions.

A second key observation that emerges from this table is that the expected and actual durations of most interventions considered as case studies in this report differ significantly. More specifically, while each intervention is expected to have a fairly limited duration, most have ended up being prolonged and many are ongoing. This discrepancy almost certainly has implications for the sufficiency of planning and resources, as well as for the strain these interventions place on military personnel. Part of this discrepancy may be due to the fact that the individuals determining the "expected length" of an intervention are often civilians working outside of DoD, either within Congress or within the President's administration, who may not understand completely the military challenges associated with an intervention. Furthermore, expected duration and actual duration may differ because of incorrect assumptions by policymakers and planners both within DoD and outside. An important caveat to keep in mind when considering the vast discrepancy between expected and actual duration is that as we selected cases, we were most interested in those that have placed stress on the

military in some way, either because of the large number of troops, the challenging environment, the duration, or the number of interventions going on at a single time. This means that we are probably more likely to capture interventions with long durations than if we had randomly drawn a selection of cases from our dataset, and longer interventions may be more likely to have exceeded their original time estimates.

However, it is still striking how significantly the U.S. ground interventions we assessed tend to differ from expectations. The case studies themselves suggest several possible reasons for this discrepancy. First, many U.S. ground interventions suffer from "mission creep" where the initial mission gradually expands to include other tasks and responsibilities that end up extending the intervention longer than originally anticipated. Mission creep often occurs when the initial objectives of the intervention are not well-defined. As an example, the intervention in Somalia is a clear case where mission creep significantly expanded the U.S. role and the amount of time U.S. forces spent in the country.[3] The second intervention in Lebanon in 1982, as part of Multinational Force II (MNF II), was similarly affected by the lack of clearly defined objectives and an expanding mission, which eventually led to a situation in which U.S. forces were directly involved in combat.[4] In some situations, it may be impossible for the Army to prevent mission objectives from shifting over the course of an intervention. However, they may be able to guard against mission creep by ensuring that the objectives and goals of the intervention are clearly spelled out and measurable. While in some cases, such as deterrence interventions, an open-ended commitment makes sense, in others it may make sense to intervene on a more limited basis. However, whether or not an open-ended commitment should be made is an issue that should likely be discussed prior to an intervention, rather than having open-ended commitments (or limited ones) become the default.

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[3] United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, p. 8.

[4] John H. Kelly "Lebanon: 1982–1984," in Jeremy R. Azrael and Emil A. Payin, eds., *U.S. and Russian Policymaking With Respect to the Use of Force*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, CF-129-CRES, 1996; U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, *The Reagan Administration and Lebanon, 1981–1984*, n.d.

A second reason that many interventions appear to endure so much longer than anticipated is that the likelihood that an initial intervention is going to require a continued presence to solidify and protect the desired outcomes is often under-estimated. This is especially true of interventions in armed conflict, which very often lead to subsequent stability and deterrent interventions. In our case studies alone this occurred in Korea, Afghanistan, and Somalia. The typical assumption is that the combat intervention will have a short, limited duration and that at this point the intervention will end. However, in most cases, the United States seems to find it difficult, for political and military reasons, to fully remove forces at the end of the combat phase, instead extending the intervention in other forms. Again, this may be unavoidable and may be a better solution than pulling U.S. troops out too early and risking a subsequent more costly intervention later. However, the likelihood that an intervention may have multiple phases is something that planners and policymakers may need to keep in mind when planning and initiating new interventions. In addition, the discrepancy between expectations and reality may also have resource implications: interventions that are significantly longer than expected may also require more resources than anticipated or budgeted.

This table also echoes back to the observations made in Chapter Two about the relationship between activity type and intervention duration. First, it is clear that deterrent interventions tend to be long and enduring. This is not surprising since they are typically motivated by a severe threat that may take decades to resolve or disappear. Deterrent interventions tend to end only when the threats driving the intervention are eliminated or disappear. Looking specifically at our case studies, this suggests that the deterrent intervention in the Baltics, while relatively small, may become a longer term, enduring intervention. Second, it is also the case that stability operations tend to be rather long in duration. This is often due to the complexity of stability operations and the types of environments in which stability operations are conducted. Stability operations in Afghanistan and Somalia were difficult and longer than anticipated because of the political, economic, and social instability associated with the conflict. This does not mean that the Army should never engage in stability operations, but does

Table 5.2
Intervention Length: Expectations vs. Reality

	Lead Time	Expected Length	Actual Length
Interventions into Armed Conflict			
Korean War (South Korea, 1950)	Very Little	2 months	About 3 years
Vietnam War (Vietnam, 1962)	Moderate	3 years	13 years
Operation Power Pack (Dominican Republic, 1965)	Very Little	No specific timeline, but expected to be reasonably short	1.5 years
Operation Restore Hope (Somalia, 1992)	Little	2 years	About 3 years
Operation Enduring Freedom/ ISAF (Afghanistan, 2001)	Little	3–5 years after initial combat phase	14 years after combat phase and ongoing
Stability Operations			
Korean Stabilization and Deterrence (South Korea, 1953)	Little	No specific timeline, but expected to have limited duration	63 years and ongoing
Lebanese Civil War—MNF I and MNF II (Lebanon, 1982)	Little	60 days	1.5 years
Implementation Force (IFOR)/ Stabilization Force (SFOR)/ European Force (EUFOR) (Bosnia, 1994)	Moderate	2 years	14 years
UNOSOM II* (Somalia, 1993–1995)	Little	2 years	About 3 years
Deterrence			
Military Advisory Group- Rep. of China (Taiwan, 1951)	Little	No specific timeline, initially intended to support intervention in Korea	28 years
Deterrence and Training in Persian Gulf—Operation Southern Watch, Desert Strike, Desert Thunder, etc. (Persian Gulf/ Kuwait, 1992)	Little	Expected to be short (~1–2 years at most)	22 years and ongoing
Operation Atlantic Resolve (Baltics, 2014)	Moderate	Open-ended	2 years and ongoing

*Citations for this table are included in the discussion in this chapter and in the cases themselves, in Appendix B. Expected duration is derived from primary and secondary sources involved in the case analysis. See Appendix B.

warn that stability operations should be initiated with a full recognition of the associated challenges and with sufficient resources available to support a potentially long intervention.

Resource Demands and Constraints

Our case study analysis also found that resource demands and constraints are a recurring issue. While the resource demands and constraints of each intervention are unique and also vary over time, we highlight here some of the common themes and patterns that emerge across the cases. Resource demands and constraints affected each of the interventions that we looked at in different ways, but there are a number of common themes and observations that emerge, highlighted by Table 5.3. In terms of resource demands, our case studies can be classified into three main categories. The first are those interventions, such as Operation Power Pack into the Dominican Republic, where a sizable force was sent to ensure mission completion.[5] For these interventions, the achievement of the primary objective often outweighed any resource constraints and other considerations. Policymakers were generally committed to sending as many personnel as needed. However, this does not mean that the right personnel were always sent and sometimes gaps and mismatches existed with certain key occupations being undermanned.

Table 5.3
Resource Demands and Constraints

	Resource Demand	Resource Constraints
Interventions into Armed Conflict		
Korean War (South Korea, 1950)	Force size too small to defeat North once China enters war	Budget limitations Other interventions
Vietnam War (Vietnam, 1962)	Demand exceeds standing force size	Budget limitations Personnel shortages (draft required)

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[5] Russell Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: US Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama*, Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006.

Table 5.3—Continued

	Resource Demand	Resource Constraints
Operation Power Pack (Dominican Republic,1965)	Large force to ensure mission completion	Timing: Difficult to mobilize needed resources quickly
Operation Restore Hope (Somalia, 1992)	Initially large force reduced over time	Budget limitations
Operation Enduring Freedom/ISAF (Afghanistan, 2001)	Initially small force that grows over time Surge in 2009 increases required resources	Other interventions High OPTEMPO
Stability Operations		
Korean Stabilization and Deterrence (South Korea, 1953)	Force size decreases, stabilizes after 1957 Serves as launching pad for Vietnam	Other interventions (at times) Shifting priorities
Lebanese Civil War— MNF I and MNF II (Lebanon, 1982)	Intentional limits to scope and force size	Political disagreement as constraint
IFOR/SFOR/EUFOR (Bosnia, 1992)	Long term rotational presence starting 1995	Budget limitations Other interventions High OPTEMPO
UNOSOM II (Somalia, 1993–1995)	Force size poorly matched to goals High demand skills are under-supplied	Mission creep creates challenges Shortages affect specific specialties
Deterrence		
Military Advisory Group-Rep. of China (Taiwan, 1951)	Force size varies but is generally modest Presence is largely "off-shore" Launching pad for Vietnam, Korea	Budget limitations Other interventions
Deterrence and Training in Persian Gulf—e.g., Operation Desert Strike, Desert Thunder, etc. (Persian Gulf, 1992)	Long term rotational presence	Budget limitations Other interventions Shortages affect specific specialties High OPTEMPO
Operation Atlantic Resolve (Baltics, 2014)	Rotational presence Force varies in size over time	Other interventions Shifting priorities

*Citations for this table are included in the discussion in this chapter and in Appendix B.

However, there are also a number of interventions for which the force size provided was insufficient to meet the demands or objectives of the intervention. Examples include Vietnam, Somalia, and Lebanon. The case of Lebanon is one where the force size was intentionally kept small for political reasons. Those planning the U.S. intervention intentionally sent only a USMC Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) in order to limit the scope of the U.S. intervention. Instead of providing greater resources at the outset, troops took on new responsibilities, as the mission expanded. This intensified the mismatch between force supplied and demands.[6] In Somalia, the force size varied significantly over the course of the intervention and was only sometimes sufficient to meet the intervention's changing objectives.[7] Importantly, as noted in Chapter Two, when there are insufficient resources to support an intervention's objectives, the stress of these unmet demands often falls most heavily on certain specialties and often requires that personnel work outside of their specialties to meet requirements. Finally, it is worth noting that these interventions where force size fails to meet the demands of the intervention often appear to involve stability operations or COIN as part of their mission requirements.

Finally, there are a number of interventions that have varying force size and resource demands over the course of the intervention. For example, the force size in Somalia varied greatly over the course of Operation Restore Hope and UNOSOM II.[8] Similarly, the size of the intervention in Afghanistan started small, grew larger over time, reached a peak during the surge in 2011, and then decreased substantially to about 10,000 troops in 2016.[9] The intervention in Taiwan

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[6] Lou Cannon and Carl M. Cannon, *Reagan's Disciple: George W. Bush's Troubled Quest for a Presidential Legacy*, New York: Public Affairs, 2008, p. 144; Geoffrey Kemp, "The American Peacekeeping Role in Lebanon," in Anthony McDermott and Kjeil Skjelsbaek, eds., *The Multinational Force in Beirut 1982–1984*, Gainesville, Fla.: University Press of Florida, 1991, p. 138.

[7] Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst, "Somalia and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 2, 1996, pp. 70–85, pp. 75–77.

[8] United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, pp. 14, 61, 194.

[9] Heidi M. Peters, Moshe Schwartz, and Lawrence Kapp, *Department of Defense Contractor and Troop Levels in Iraq and Afghanistan: 2007–2016*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service R44116, August 15, 2016.

is another one that varied substantially over its duration, largely in response to changing external conditions, changes in the perceived threat from China, and the escalation and termination of other conflicts in the region, including the Korean and Vietnam Wars.[10] Large variations in force size seem to occur in numerous intervention types, rather than just affecting one specific type of intervention. There are also a number of interventions that make use of long term rotational presence, that is, units of personnel stationed overseas for a limited period of time who are then replaced by new units at some regular interval. Long-term rotational presence often places significant stress on military personnel by increasing OPTEMPO and disrupting training timelines and schedules.[11]

Table 5.3 highlights a number of common resource constraints that appear frequently and consistently over the cases we considered. The first, unsurprisingly, is budget limitations. A number of the interventions that we investigated have been limited by budget pressures and constrained monetary resources. In some cases, budget constraints are due to the size and demands of the intervention. For example, the intervention in Afghanistan was a security priority, but the sheer cost of the intervention, combined with that of the war in Iraq, created pressures on planners to limit its scope and reduce costs where possible.[12] Similarly, the cost of the Vietnam War was a constraint as it escalated, especially given the economic pressures of the 1970s.[13]

A second common constraint is a shortage of available personnel, often driven by the existence of other ongoing interventions occurring at the same time. Because the number of available military personnel is a limited resource, when there are several interventions occurring at once, there may be a limit to how many personnel can be sent to

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[10] See Table B.2 in Appendix B.

[11] J. Michael Polich, Bruce Orvis, and W. Michael Hix, *Small Deployments, Big Problems*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, IP-197, 2000.

[12] Wright et al., 2010, pp. 238–239.

[13] Richard A. Hunt, *Melvin Laird and the Foundation of the Post-Vietnam Military, 1969–1973*, Washington, D.C.: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2015, pp. 63–64.

any one intervention. The 1990s, for instance, were a period of high OPTEMPO due to the number of ongoing interventions in Haiti, Bosnia, Somalia, the Persian Gulf, and elsewhere. Decisions about how many personnel to send to each specific intervention were affected by considerations of how many personnel were needed elsewhere.[14] Similar challenges faced planners during the mid-2000s when the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were at their heights: at points, the force in Afghanistan was limited by the intensifying demand in Iraq.[15] In many ways, this type of personnel constraint is closely related to budget constraints, since often a factor constraining the number of personnel is the lack of a budget large enough to support, train, and resource them. There is also a time component related to resource stress that is worth noting. It is the budget in the previous year or previous years that determine the number of personnel that the Army has in a given intervention at present. If this number of personnel proves to be insufficient, the damage is already done. Even if there are plenty of resources available now, policymakers cannot go back in time and fix the undermanned issue that set the intervention off on the wrong foot.

A final point on personnel and resource constraints has to do with the ability and willingness of military planners to move personnel from long-running deterrent missions to contingency operations where personnel shortages exist. While in theory personnel stationed in Korea, Japan, or Germany could be available for redeployment to other conflicts and contingencies, our case studies suggest that, in general, this has not happened. At the height of Iraq and Afghanistan, for instance, where demand for additional personnel was high, few units were moved from South Korea or Germany to Iraq or Afghanistan. Similarly, during the 1990s, few forces were drawn from Europe or East Asia to supplement missions in the Persian Gulf. Thus, there is a sense in which forces involved in long-term deterrence missions are "untouchable" and not available for redeployment to support other types of missions.

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[14] Andrew Feickert and Stephen Daggett, *A Historical Perspective on "Hollow Forces,"* Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service R42334, January 31, 2012, p. 13.

[15] Wright et al., 2010, pp. 192, 228, 238.

However, it is worth noting that personnel constraints do not only result from the demands of several simultaneous interventions. Instead, personnel constraints can also result from a military that does not have enough personnel to meet demands regardless of other ongoing interventions. During Vietnam, for example, personnel shortages meant that a draft was required to raise necessary manpower. Since the 1972 shift to an All-Volunteer Force, the draft has not been used. Instead, the military has relied extensively on the National Guard and Reserve to augment active duty manpower. However, pressure to downsize the military after the end of the Cold War has sometimes left the military lacking needed manpower. During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, for instance, the military relied on policies that prevented soldiers from separating from the military and used incentives to increase the number of personnel they attracted.[16] They also filled critical gaps using civilians and contractors.[17] Personnel shortages can also be more nuanced, affecting only certain interventions or can manifest as a mismatch between demands and the types of personnel deployed. In UNOSOM II, in Somalia, for instance, shortages throughout the conflict were driven by mismatches between the intervention's ambitious goals and the types of personnel deployed.[18] In Iraq and Afghanistan, constantly shifting demands meant that support troops sometimes were forced to conduct counterinsurgency tasks such as clearing and holding territory from insurgent control and combat troops were sometimes asked to perform security and patrolling tasks.[19]

Related to the constraint created by personnel shortages, OPTEMPO, or the rate at which personnel are being deployed, can also constrain ground interventions. There is limit to how frequently and for how long military personnel can deploy while still ensuring

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[16] Thom Shanker, "'Stop-Loss' Will All but End by 2011, Gates Says," *New York Times*, March 18, 2009; Congressional Budget Office, *Recruiting, Retention, and Future Levels of Military Personnel*, October 2006, p. 7.

[17] Micah Zenko, *The New Unknown Soldiers of Afghanistan and Iraq*, foreignpolicy.com, May 29, 2015.

[18] Clarke and Herbst, 1996, pp. 75–77.

[19] Estes, 2011, p. 150.

sufficient time for training and other essential activities. As a result, there may be constraints on the size and duration of a military intervention that are created by these limitations. Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and the deterrent intervention in the Persian Gulf in the 1990s were both affected by this constraint. In the Persian Gulf, a rotational presence meant that a new contingent of personnel had to be rotated into the theater at regular intervals. The constant churn, combined with other ongoing interventions, placed stress on personnel and disrupted training timelines.[20] Had this deterrent presence been increased further in size, the stress it placed on readiness would only have grown more severe.

A final set of constraints that emerge from our cases relates to strategic priorities and political bureaucracy, but touches again on the resource constraints described above. Shifting priorities create a constraint when they limit the willingness or ability to allocate resources to a specific intervention. Shifting priorities can constrain leaders by limiting their willingness or ability to allocate resources to a specific intervention. As an example, changing priorities in the late 1950s led to a downsizing of U.S. forces in Korea under Eisenhower's "New Look."[21] By contrast, the recent strategic "pivot" toward East Asia has raised the profile and importance of forces stationed in South Korea and Japan.[22] As another example, shifting priorities after the end of the Cold War led to a reallocation of forces away from Europe and a reduction of heavy brigades deployed there. However, the rise of a more aggressive Russia and the threat this poses to the Baltics and other NATO allies contributes to the need for additional troops in this region. Because of the redeployment decisions made in years prior, appropriately resourcing this intervention with not just the right numbers of personnel, but

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[20] Polich, Orvis, and Hix, 2000.

[21] Warner R. Schilling, Paul Y. Hammond, and Glenn H. Snyder, *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1962, p. 456.

[22] Mark E. Manyin, Stephen Daggett, Ben Dolven, Susan Lawrence, Michael Martin, Ronald O'Rourke, and Bruce Vaughn, *Pivot to the Pacific? The Obama Administration's "Rebalancing Toward Asia,"* Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, R42448, March 28, 2012, p. 11.

also the right types of personnel has been difficult.[23] Finally, politics itself can also be a constraint on the size of an intervention. In the case of the intervention in Lebanon in 1982, it was political disagreement about the intervention that created the greatest constraint. This political disagreement led to intentional limits on the types of personnel deployed in order to ensure that the aims of the mission (and its capabilities) would be limited.[24] This example is an important reminder that sometimes nonmilitary forces can play a role in constraining and limiting the resources available for an intervention, either directly by limiting the resources allocated or indirectly by constraining the types of personnel who can be sent.

Leading Indicators and Warning Signs of Future Interventions

Our cases also revealed a number of important warning signs and leading indicators that might have alerted military planners to the potential for a coming intervention. These leading indicators are valuable because they could serve as signposts for future interventions, helping planners anticipate interventions more effectively. Table 5.4 outlines some of the key leading indicators, or signposts, of the interventions that emerged from the case studies. As before, there are a number of common signposts that appear multiple times, as well as some that seem particularly useful and powerful as warning signs of future interventions.

Before discussing the identified signposts from our case studies, it is worth returning briefly to the discussion of U.S. interests. Each of our case studies provides evidence of the ways in which U.S. interests shape decisions about where and when the United States intervenes with ground forces. For example, the interventions in the Dominican Republic and Korea were taken to prevent the spread of Communism. The recent intervention in the Baltics was motivated by a desire to contain Russian expansion and also by a treaty commitment to NATO

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[23] Artur Kacprzyk, "U.S. Military Presence in Central and Eastern Europe," *ETH Zurich Center for Security Studies*, September 24, 2015.

[24] David C. Martin and John Walcott, *Best Laid Plans: The Inside Story of America's War Against Terrorism*, New York: Harper & Row, 1988, p. 94; David C. Wills, *The First War on Terrorism: Counter-Terrorism Policy During the Reagan Administration*, New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003, p. 52.

Table 5.4
Case Study Signposts

	Identified Signposts
Interventions into Armed Conflict	
Korean War (South Korea, 1950)	• Territorial Claim • Previous Intervention
Vietnam War (Vietnam, 1962)	• Gradual Escalation of U.S. Activity • Elite Opinion • Territorial Claim
Operation Power Pack (Dominican Republic, 1965)	• Previous Intervention • Close relationship with U.S.
Operation Restore Hope (Somalia, 1992)	• Humanitarian Crisis • U.N. Coalition • Elite and Public Opinion
Operation Enduring Freedom/ ISAF (Afghanistan, 2001)	• Attack on U.S. Soil • Gradual Escalation of U.S. Activity
Stability Operations	
Korean Stabilization and Deterrence (South Korea, 1953)	• Involvement in Combat Phase • Territorial Claim (Threat of) • Close Relationship with U.S.
Lebanese Civil War—MNF I and MNF II (Lebanon, 1982)	• Previous Intervention • U.N. Coalition • Humanitarian Crisis
IFOR/SFOR/EUFOR (Bosnia, 1992)	• Location • Gradual Escalation of U.S. Activity • U.N Coalition, Involvement of NATO Ally • Humanitarian Crisis
UNISOM II (Somalia, 1993–1995)	• Involvement in Combat Phase • U.N. Coalition • Humanitarian Crisis
Deterrence	
Military Advisory Group-Rep. of China (Taiwan, 1951)	• Close Relationship with the U.S.
Deterrence and Training in Persian Gulf—e.g., Operation Desert Strike, Desert Thunder, etc. (Persian Gulf, 1992)	• Territorial Claim (Threat of) • Involvement in Combat Phase
Operation Atlantic Resolve (Baltics, 2014)	• Territorial Claim (Threat of) • Close Relationship with the U.S.

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

allies. Interventions in the Persian Gulf may have been motivated by both security concerns and by a desire to maintain economic access to the key Middle Eastern region. As before, however, these interests are often reflected by specific indicators, such as the location of the country, its relationship with the United States, the degree and nature of threat, or the presence of a multilateral coalition. Thus, while we do not call out U.S. interests as a specific signpost, several of the more specific signposts we present do reflect these interests.

A first important signpost that emerged from our case studies was the existence of a previous U.S. intervention in the target country. As noted previously in our statistical analysis and as highlighted in several of our cases, the United States is significantly more likely to intervene in a country when it has already done so in the past. There are three ways this "repeat" intervention mechanism might manifest itself. The more straightforward cases are those where the United States intervenes, leaves, and then returns at a later point. Interventions in Iraq and Haiti are two examples from our dataset. There are several possible reasons for this pattern. One is that the United States does not fully complete its initial intervention and so is forced to return at a later point. This is the incompletion mechanism discussed in Chapter Four. The other is that the United States simply has a high interest in a specific set of countries, and when these countries face challenges or are unstable, the United States intervenes, regardless of how many times this occurs. Knowing this, policymakers and planners may benefit from paying special attention to events in those countries where the United States has already intervened. When these countries appear to be slipping into instability or face internal conflicts, planners and policymakers may choose to develop contingency plans for a possible intervention. Finally, the United States may have a repeat intervention in a country if a new set of circumstances, unrelated to the initial intervention, emerges that requires an intervention. In our dataset, this final explanation is the least common. Repeat interventions in a single country are typically related in some way, either due to incompletion or the underlying characteristics of the target country.

The second type of repeat intervention is not exactly a "repeat" but instead a continuation of an earlier intervention but with a changed

objective and set of tasks. Our case studies show a number of cases where the United States initially planned a short combat intervention but then stayed to conduct long running stability operations and deterrence. This occurred in Korea, Somalia, and Afghanistan, among others. This "stabilization" mechanism can also serve as a signpost to military planners and policymakers. Once the United States becomes involved in an intervention, especially an intervention into an armed conflict, this intervention is likely to lead to stability operations and peacekeeping in the same country. Thus, preparations for post-conflict operations should begin when the combat operation begins, rather than delaying this activity until the combat phase is over.

A third type of repeat intervention that might serve as a signpost is more accurately described as gradually escalating involvement that begins with tools such as sanctions, moves to no-fly zones or air strikes, and ends in ground involvement. In this case, the signpost would be the low-level initial involvement, in whatever form it occurs. Importantly, then, air and naval interventions, especially when unsuccessful, may serve as a signpost for future ground interventions. The U.S. intervention in Bosnia is a good example of a case where gradual escalation of U.S. military involvement served as a clear signpost of a coming ground intervention. U.S. involvement began first with enforcement of a no-fly zone and maritime interdiction operation in 1992–1993 and then airstrikes starting in 1994. This transitioned to a small advisory force, and finally, in 1995, into a large U.S. ground intervention as part of a U.N. coalition.[25]

Another possible signpost that appears relevant in several of our cases is the existence of large refugee flows or a significant humanitarian crisis. The existence of a humanitarian crisis may not be sufficient on its own to motivate a U.S. intervention. There are certainly many instances where there have been large numbers of refugees and/or a severe humanitarian crisis where U.S. policymakers have chosen not to get involved with large ground forces. However, refugee flows and humanitarian crises may be contributing factors—particularly

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[25] Ivo H. Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000.

depending on the region in which they occur — and as result, looking for countries or conflicts with significant numbers of refugees or humanitarian crises may allow policymakers and military planners to identify areas of higher risk for U.S. interventions and allow them to focus their contingency planning. Examples from our cases include the interventions in Bosnia, Somalia, and Lebanon. In each of these cases, the large number of refugees and dramatic humanitarian crises could have warned military planners of the potential for an intervention into these countries had these indicators been interpreted as important leading indicators of a potential future intervention.

The target country's relationship with the United States also emerges as an important signpost of future interventions in our case studies, one that was also highlighted consistently in the statistical analysis. The United States is often driven to intervene in a country because of its historical relationship, alliance, or economic partnership with the target country. For example, in the case of the Dominican Republic, the U.S. intervention was partially driven by the U.S. history of involvement in the Dominican Republic's political affairs. Similarly, the intervention in the Baltics to deter Russia was driven by the NATO alliance and the U.S. commitment to protect NATO allies. Finally, the intervention in Bosnia was similarly driven by U.S. alliances and partnerships, in this case not with Bosnia explicitly, but with Bosnia's European allies who viewed the conflict in Bosnia as a possible security threat. When key allies or partners appear under threat, the United States appears to be more likely to intervene. Thus, planners and policymakers may choose to pay extra attention when an ally or partner faces a security threat or internal security crisis.

Another possible signpost highlighted by our case studies (and statistical analysis) is the existence of a territorial claim by one state against another when the target state is a close U.S. ally or partner. The United States has intervened several times in response to such territorial claims, usually to prevent the success of the claim and maintain the original borders. The Gulf War, Vietnam War, and the Korean War were all responses to territorial claims and disputes. The deterrent intervention in Taiwan and the Baltics were also attempts to prevent territorial aggression against U.S. allies. Our cases suggest that the United

States is highly motivated to counter direct threats to the sovereignty of close allies and is willing to intervene in response. The same may not be true, however, of interventions into territorial disputes between two adversaries or those involving states where the United States does not have strong security commitments. Thus, new territorial claims against U.S. partners or allies may serve as a red flag that alerts planners to the potential for a possible military intervention.

While our statistical analysis found little evidence that domestic politics affects U.S. decisions about where and when to intervene, our case studies suggest two factors that might matter.[26] First, public opinion does appear to influence decisions by policymakers about interventions, both initiation and termination, and as result, strong public support or even demand for an intervention may be an important warning sign for future interventions. As an example, public opinion in support for the intervention in Somalia was one of the key factors in the decision to ultimately begin an intervention in the country.[27] In other cases, public opinion against an intervention (for example, that in Syria) can create a constraint (although not a final barrier) on the ability of policymakers to launch an intervention.[28] Planners may look to shifts in public opinion as one factor to consider when estimating the likelihood of an intervention in a given conflict or crisis, although public opinion can be difficult to predict in advance. Swings in public opinion, then, may provide some insight into the likelihood of an intervention, but may not provide significant warning time for planners.

A second domestic political factor that our case studies highlight as a possible signpost is the opinion of political elites. Support or pres-

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[26] This factor is not statistically significant in our statistical analysis, likely due to the idiosyncratic nature of U.S. intervention decisions and the fact that public opinion appears to matter in only some interventions. This suggests that public opinion may be an important factor depending on the context, the nature of the possible intervention, and the domestic political environment.

[27] Matthew A. Baum, "How Public Opinion Constrains the Use of Force: The Case of Operation Restore Hope," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 2, 2004, pp. 187–226, p. 198.

[28] See, for example, "American Views on Intervention in Syria," *New York Times*, September 10, 2013.

sure for an intervention from political elites, including civilian members of DoD, Department of State, and members of Congress can play a role in the decision to intervene or not to intervene. Elite opinion is important because at least some level of elite support may be necessary for military action to occur, especially when those elites are members of Congress or other influential government organizations. An intervention that has limited political support is unlikely to occur, but one with elite support, while it is certainly no guarantee, is more likely. As in the case of public opinion, shifts in elite opinion could inform policymakers and military planners about the likelihood of an intervention and the need for advance planning.[29] Elite opinion was a driving force for Operation Restore Hope in Somalia. Importantly, public opinion can also be a constraint on military interventions and can affect not only the decision to intervene, but also decisions about manpower and resourcing.

Another signpost that appeared in several of our cases was the involvement of NATO allies or a U.N. coalition. While the involvement of NATO allies in an intervention or the deployment of a U.N. coalition is rarely sufficient on its own to trigger a U.S. intervention, it is often an important factor that tips the balance. For example, the intervention in Bosnia is one that was debated extensively before the United States eventually sent ground troops. The presence of a U.N. coalition was one of the factors that tipped the balance.[30] A similar situation occurred in the interventions in Somalia in the 1990s and in Lebanon in 1982. There are certainly cases where U.N. coalitions and NATO involvement has not led to large scale U.S. ground intervention, such as Libya in 2011, but interventions that already have U.N. support or the involvement of key allies should be seen as more likely areas for U.S. involvement.

A final warning sign is one that is extremely rare and which often does not give planners very much warning time in most cases: attacks

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[29] Jon Western, "Sources of Humanitarian Intervention: Beliefs, Information, and Advocacy in the U.S. Decisions on Somalia and Bosnia," *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 4, 2002, pp. 112–142, p. 140.

[30] Daalder, 2000.

on U.S. soil. There are have been only two direct attacks on U.S. soil since 1900 — the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and the September 11 attacks — but both have resulted in rapid military responses. Notably, it appears to be only foreign attacks on U.S. soil that have led to this rapid response. Based on our analysis, attacks on U.S. interests overseas (including both assets and civilians) do not seem to provoke this same rapid response. With so few instances of attacks on U.S. soil, it is difficult to generalize or say for sure whether every such attack would result in a rapid military intervention. However, even if it were a certainty that an attack on U.S. soil would lead immediately to a military response, there would still likely be little lead or warning time to allow for planning and preparation. As a result, while this may be an important signpost, it is unclear that it will be of much use to planners. Table 5.5 summarizes the key signposts that emerge from our case studies for each of our three intervention types.

Table 5.5
Signposts by Intervention Types

Signpost	Interventions into Armed Conflict	Stability Operations	Deterrence
Relationship with U.S.	■		■
Territorial claim	■		■
Previous intervention	■		
Elite and public opinion	■	■	
Location of target country		■	
Humanitarian crisis	■	■	
Multinational coalition		■	
Involvement in combat phase		■	■
Attack on U.S. soil	■		
Gradual escalation of U.S. activity	■		

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Blue-shaded boxes indicate signpost present in at least one case study of interventions of this type.

Summary and Implications

The case studies suggest a number of key insights for the Army. Importantly, the observations presented here draw from trends across all cases and are not based on any single intervention. Thus, they may be more generalizable across all ground interventions than would be lessons drawn from individual cases.

Interventions often occur with little lead time for planning and preparation.
Our cases suggest that a large percentage of U.S. ground interventions are, in fact, relatively unexpected, providing planners with little time to prepare or plan. In some cases, the lack of lead time resulted because the event which triggered the intervention was itself unexpected. However, in many, the lack of lead time was compounded by failure to perceive or attend to key warning signs and leading indicators of the potential for an intervention. The fact that many interventions appear to have little lead time makes attention to possible signposts more important and also raises the need for preplanning exercises that can help Army planners and military leaders prepare in advance of potential contingencies.

Interventions often last significantly longer than planned for or expected.
As discussed elsewhere in this chapter, the expected and actual duration of interventions often differ substantially, with the actual intervention lasting significantly longer than expected. There are several possible reasons for this. One is that the individuals defining the expected length are outside the military and may not fully understand the time required to complete mission objectives. It is also possible that those within DoD make incorrect assumptions about an intervention. However, another explanation is that many U.S. interventions that are expected to be limited, particularly those into armed conflicts, end up continuing after the initial combat phase as either long-running stability operations or enduring deterrent interventions. This trend suggests that when new interventions into armed conflict begin, planners should immediately also plan for the likely "follow-on" interventions, even if there is no

clear intention for such a follow-on at the time of initiation. These plans, and the rationale and justification for their necessity, may help the Army acquire the resources needed to support the *entire* intervention, and not just its initial stages.

Vague or rapidly shifting mission objectives create mismatches between demands and the types or numbers of personnel deployed. Our cases revealed a number of different examples of interventions that have either had vague and ambiguous objectives or objectives that rapidly shifted after the intervention started due to conditions on the ground or other political factors. In both cases, the lack of a clearly defined and consistent set of objectives created challenges for planners and also mismatches between the type of personnel deployed to an intervention and the types of personnel demanded. In the ideal world, all interventions would have clearly defined goals and objectives before they are initiated. However, the definition of the intervention's objectives often lies outside of the Army's control and with policymakers within and outside DoD. Furthermore, when conditions on the ground are rapidly changing, it may be difficult to also prevent shifts in the objectives and demands of the mission. Having personnel who are cross-trained to serve multiple different functions and perform many different occupations is likely the most feasible solution to this challenge, but this solution brings its own challenges, particularly for existing training programs and infrastructure.

Closer attention to key intervention signposts could increase preparation and planning time and allow for better anticipation of interventions.
Our cases highlighted a number of signposts or leading indicators of potential future interventions that military planners can use to better anticipate and prepare for coming interventions. The majority of these signposts are observable and so could be tracked over time to identify conflicts, crises, and countries where there is the potential for a future intervention. By identifying countries or areas of higher risk for a U.S. intervention, planners and policymakers could focus their contingency or deployment planning on identifying the demands for these specific scenarios. While this advance planning would not aim to

develop detailed operational plans (those would still need to be developed if the intervention were to occur), beginning the planning process and developing some resource estimates and generic outlines for what the intervention might look like would go a long way to reducing the number of "surprise" interventions and speeding the ability of the Army to respond quickly and efficiently when needed.

Ties to Statistical Analysis

As noted at the start of this chapter, the case studies were intended to both supplement the statistical analysis by addressing questions that the statistical analyses do not provide a complete answer to and to assess the extent to which our statistical analysis does indeed appear to identify factors that play a significant role in predicting where and when the United States is likely to intervene. The case studies do lend additional support for a number of the key factors identified by the statistical analysis, including the existence of a previous U.S. intervention, the relevance of territorial claims, the relationship between the United States and the target country, and the influence of humanitarian concerns and refugee flows, among others. However, it also identified a number of other important determinants that we could not include in our statistical analysis in a systematic way, such as elite and public opinion and the presence of a coalition. Thus, the case studies do not contradict our statistical analysis and instead add nuance by identifying additional key factors and a reminder that the decision to intervene militarily in a conflict is a complicated one that involves a large number of factors.

Signposts of Future Interventions

Defining a Signpost

All ground interventions place some kind of stress or strain on the military, whether it be stress due to lack of resources, the mobilization and deployment timeline, or the specific tasks involved. These stressors are exacerbated by unanticipated interventions, that is interventions that begin with little warning and without time for necessary planning activities. Ideally, the Army would have a set of signposts or warning indicators that could alert planners to the potential for a coming intervention before it actually happens, giving them time to mobilize needed resources, accelerate training, and take other steps to prepare the force for an impending deployment.

In this report, we use the term "signpost" to refer to a specific leading indicator that a military planner or analyst could observe or track to assess the likelihood of a new intervention in a given time and place. Examples might include the location of a conflict, the severity of a threat, or the relative balance of capabilities between the United States and a target state. Signposts can be characteristics of a target state, characteristics of the United States or characteristics of the international system. Signposts can also be used to define "danger zones" or sets of circumstances where the chance of a new intervention appears to be so high as to warrant a more significant preparatory response. In this chapter, we provide a number of signposts that can be used to anticipate the onset of new ground interventions, drawing on both our statistical and case study analyses. For those signposts that emerge from the statistical analysis, we are able to provide specific metrics or parameters

that can be used to estimate the likelihood of a new intervention. For those signposts that emerge from our case studies, we provide a more qualitative assessment of how these specific indicators might allow the Army to better anticipate future interventions.[1] We provide three sets of such indicators, one for each type of intervention covered in previous chapters: interventions into armed conflict, stability operations, and deterrent interventions.

While the signposts presented in this chapter can help planners anticipate future interventions, it is important to keep in mind that decisions about where and when to intervene typically involve multiple factors in combination. For example, it may be the threat posed by an adversary, the U.S. relationship with the ally, and the location of the threat that together tip the balance toward a new deterrent intervention. As a result, while each of these signposts can be used to monitor the likelihood of future interventions, it would be misleading to assume that any one factor on its own is likely to determine whether or not the U.S. intervenes. Furthermore, while the signposts we identify are associated with the likelihood and size of interventions, interventions are unlikely to occur in every case where one of these signposts appears. We intend the signposts to serve as heuristic tools and guides for Army strategists for planners, rather than deterministic predictors. Tables 6.1a and 6.1b summarize the key signposts considered in this chapter by type of intervention. While some signposts apply to only one type of intervention, others apply to several.

Signposts for Interventions into Armed Conflict

Relationship with the United States

Our statistical analysis identified the relationship between the target state and the United States to be a significant predictor of the likelihood that the United States intervenes in a given armed conflict as well as the size of that intervention. There are many possible ways

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[1]   We do not include every signpost identified in Chapters Three and Five in this discussion of signposts, but rather focus our attention on those signposts that appear to be most common and useful as predictors of future interventions.

Table 6.1a
Signposts for Likelihood of Interventions

Signpost	Interventions into Armed Conflict	Stability Operations	Deterrence
Relationship with U.S.	■		■
U.S. capabilities	■		
War weariness	■		
Destructiveness of the conflict	■		
Degree of threat			■
Previous intervention	■		
Elite and public opinion	■		
Location of target country		■	
Rate of U.S. economic growth			■
Military assistance		■	
Number of refugees		■	
Multinational coalition		■	
Involvement in combat phase		■	
Attack on U.S. soil	■		

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Blue cells indicate signposts covered in this chapter.

Table 6.1b
Signposts for Size of Interventions

Signpost	Interventions into Armed Conflict	Stability Operations	Deterrence
Relationship with U.S.	■		■
Territorial claim			■
Wealth of target nation		■	
Number of troops in combat phase		■	

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Blue cells indicate signposts covered in this chapter.

to measure the relationship between the United States and a partner country, but perhaps the strongest signal of a close tie is the existence of a defensive alliance. As a signpost, according to our analysis, the presence of a defensive alliance can make an intervention more likely, but also smaller. As noted in Table 6.2, the United States is about twice as likely to intervene into an armed conflict taking place within a U.S. ally. While the likelihood of an intervention into a U.S. ally during an armed conflict is about 32 percent, the likelihood of an intervention into a non-ally is only 16 percent. However, interventions into non-allies tend to be significantly larger. There are several possible explanations for this difference in size. We suggest two possibilities here. First, the difference may emerge because allies are generally more capable and do not require as much support. Second, U.S. forces get involved earlier in the course of conflicts involving allies, when fewer troops may be needed. While an intervention into an ally on average in our analysis includes about 280 personnel, an intervention into a conflict in a non-ally is likely to include, on average, 4,350 personnel (see Table 6.3). For the U.S. Army, this suggests that when close allies become involved in armed conflicts, there is a sizable risk that the United States will get involved in an intervention in that country, and taking some early preparatory steps, such as drawing up contingency plans, might be valuable. However, since these interventions tend to be on the smaller side, it may not be necessary to rapidly scale up force size or readiness. However, if it appears that the United States is likely to intervene in an armed conflict in a non-ally, then planning should include consideration of deployment tempos, training schedules, and

Table 6.2
Relationship with the United States as a Signpost for Interventions into Armed Conflict

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Summary of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
			U.S. Ally (%)	Non-Ally (%)
Relationship with U.S.	Defensive alliance	Interventions into close allies are about 2 times more likely	31.6	16.0

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Table 6.3
Relationship with the United States as a Signpost for Size of Intervention into Armed Conflict

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Summary of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
Relationship with U.S.	Defensive alliance	Interventions into close allies are significantly smaller	**U.S. Ally (on average)**	**Non-Ally (on average)**
			280	4,350

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

possibly recruiting and retention incentives to ensure sufficient personnel are available.

Destructiveness of the War

Another important determining factor of where and when the United States intervenes in armed conflicts is the destructiveness of the war As described previously, there are several possible ways to measure the destructiveness of a given war, but the most common is to use an estimate of the total battle deaths caused.[2] As a signpost, battle deaths may be an important leading indicator of an impending intervention. Interventions become significantly more likely as the number of battle deaths from a conflict rise. This may reflect the fact that the United States tends to intervene primarily in the most destructive cases that have the highest level of human suffering. To quantify this effect, Table 6.4 shows the probability of a U.S. intervention at various levels of battle deaths, ranging from 1,000 to 450,000. At 1,000 battle deaths, the chance of U.S. intervention is only 15 percent. At 60,000 battle deaths, this likelihood jumps to 30 percent. At 450,000 battle deaths, the likelihood of a U.S. intervention is 45 percent. Figure 6.1 shows this relationship between the likelihood of the intervention and the number of battle deaths over the full range of battle deaths. Although the probability of intervention rises more slowly than the number of

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[2] Specifically, we looked at the number of battle deaths that had occurred involving all parties in prior years of the conflict.

Table 6.4
Destructiveness of the War as a Signpost for Interventions into Armed Conflict

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Summary of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
Destructiveness of war	Number of battle deaths	Interventions are more likely when total battle deaths in prior years are greater	**Battle Deaths**	**Probability of Intervention (%)**
			1,000	15
			60,000	30
			450,000	45

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

battle deaths, there is a consistent increase in the likelihood of interventions as the conflict becomes more destructive.

While the best way to estimate battle deaths is often controversial, once a single methodology or benchmark is selected, it should be fairly straightforward to identify conflicts that have high numbers of battle deaths and that therefore may have a greater likelihood of a possible intervention. To provide some concrete examples, through 2015, the conflict in Syria (including all parties and related conflicts in Iraq, Lebanon, and Turkey) has 145,233 battle deaths according to the UCDP battle death data.[3] Holding all else equal the probability of an intervention based solely on battle deaths would be at about 38 percent. The conflict in Ukraine, in contrast, has had 4,946 battle deaths (over the course of 2014 and 2015)[4] and would have an intervention probability of about 18 percent, if it were the only factor that mattered. As noted elsewhere, other factors (discussed here and elsewhere in the report) may play a significant role in determining whether or not an intervention actually occurs, so the actual likelihood of those two interventions is not actually 38 or 18 percent. However, these rough measures can still be used to identify the relative likelihood of intervention in different locations and at different times.

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[3]   Uppsala Conflict Data Program, *UCDP Battle-Related Deaths*, Dataset v.5-2015, Uppsala University.

[4]   Ibid.

Figure 6.1
Probability of Intervention in Armed Conflict as Number of
Battle Deaths Rises
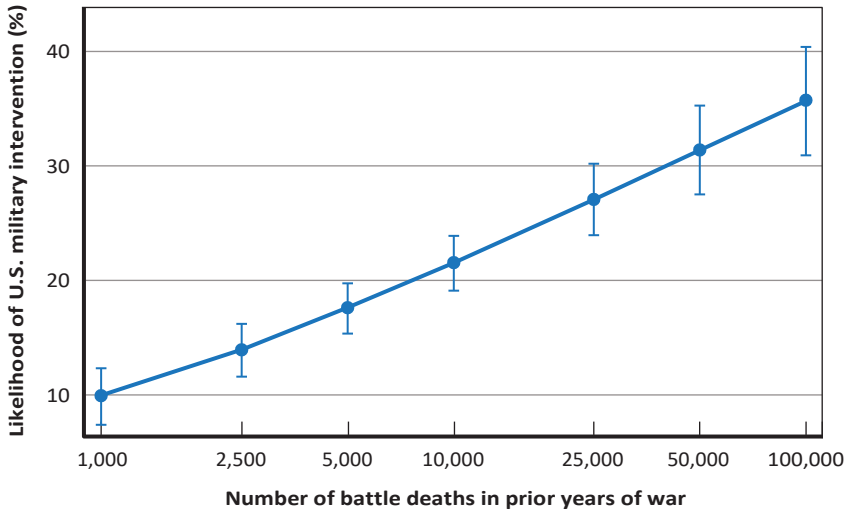
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
NOTE: Vertical bars represent confidence intervals; in this case the range in which
the value is 95 percent is likely to fall.
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The destructiveness of the war is also a driver of the size of the subsequent U.S. intervention. The relationship between the number of battle deaths in a given war and the size of the U.S. intervention is largely one of scale. Wars that have many battle deaths tend to occur in areas with large populations, and interventions into areas with large populations generally must be large.

Previous Intervention

A signpost of future interventions into armed conflict that emerges from both our case studies and our statistical analysis is the existence of a previous U.S. intervention in a target country. We have already discussed the reasons why repeat interventions occur and demonstrated that these repeated interventions can lead to clustering. Here we focus on the impact of repeat interventions on the likelihood of an intervention. Table 6.5 shows the probability of an intervention in countries

Table 6.5
Previous U.S. Interventions as a Signpost for Interventions into Armed Conflict

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/Relevant Range of Variable	
			Previous Intervention (%)	**No Previous Intervention (%)**
Previous intervention	U.S. involvement in previous intervention in same country	Interventions are about 6.5 times more likely in countries where U.S. has intervened before	35.6	5.5

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

where the United States has and has not intervened in the past. Where the United States has intervened in the past, the probability of a new intervention is about 36 percent, while where there was not a previous intervention, this probability drops to only 5.5 percent. For planners, when countries with a history of past U.S. interventions appear to be slipping into a significant interstate or intrastate conflict, it may make sense to at least begin considering what a U.S. intervention into the conflict would require. This does not mean that the United States would necessarily get involved in a conventional combat intervention — the activity might be advisory or security, but it would still be valuable for planners in these instances to begin considering the appropriate type and size of an intervention.

War Weariness

As noted in Chapter Three, our statistical analysis found evidence that significant U.S. casualties during previous conflicts can have a meaningful effect on the likelihood of a new U.S. intervention. This "war weariness" reduces the likelihood of a new intervention by about six percent for the first nine years after the U.S. combat deaths. While most signposts discussed here serve as warning signs of a coming conflict, as a signpost, war weariness does the opposite, warning of a decreased likelihood of a future intervention. Planners operating in the aftermath of a U.S. intervention with significant U.S. combat deaths should keep in mind that this recent experience with significant U.S.

Table 6.6
War Weariness as a Signpost

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable
War weariness	Years since significant U.S. combat deaths	Interventions are less likely following interventions with significant U.S. deaths	*Interventions are up to 6% less likely in first 9 years after U.S. combat deaths*

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

casualties may, in fact, put a damper on the likelihood of another new intervention in the near future. However, it is also worth noting that the effect is temporary — at some point (around nine years according to our analysis), the dampening effect of war weariness dissipates. Table 6.6 summarizes this effect. Figure 6.2 illustrates the marginal effect of recent U.S. combat deaths subsequent years on the probability of a new

Figure 6.2
Probability of New Intervention in Armed Conflict Following Significant U.S. Combat Deaths
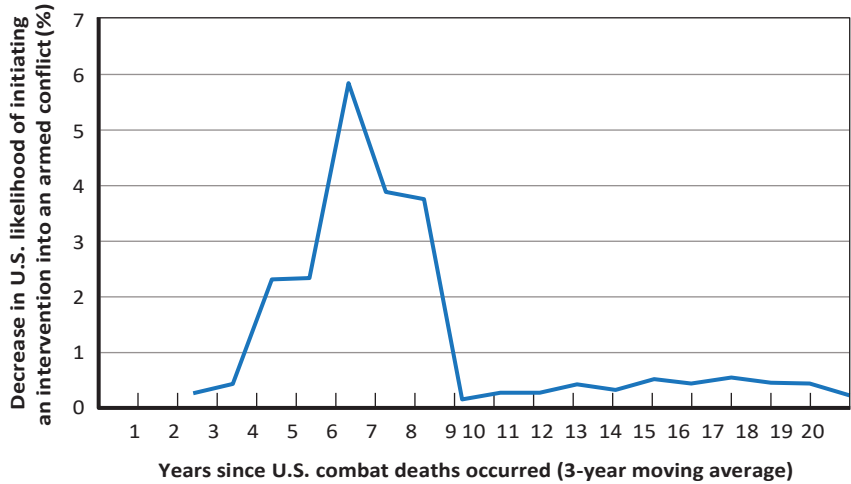
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

intervention. The graph underscores the fact that this effect is concentrated in the first 10 years and also that it may vary in the size of the effect over those 10 years. Finally, it is important to keep in mind that even in the face of war weariness, an intervention may still occur if a threat to U.S. interests is deemed severe enough. Furthermore, as noted above, war weariness may reduce the likelihood of interventions into armed conflict, but does not seem to have significant effects on other types of interventions. Given the high U.S. casualties experienced in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is realistic to expect a slightly reduced likelihood of new interventions in the near future, but also to expect that this reduced likelihood will be temporary rather than permanent.

U.S. Capabilities

When deciding where and when to intervene, the United States also considers relative capabilities. This is likely a reflection of how the U.S. role in the international system affects its decisions about how to deploy troops. In general, our analysis found that the likelihood of a U.S. intervention is greater when U.S. relative capabilities are also greater. However, U.S. relative capabilities, according to some measures including the overall capability index we used in our analysis, the Composite Index of Military Capabilities (CINC), have declined since their peak in the aftermath of World War II, and are likely to continue to decline in the future with the continued growth of China and other previously poor economies. However, as can be seen in Figure 6.3, U.S. capabilities relative to the rest of the world were remarkably steady from the 1970s to the 2000s.

As shown in Table 6.7, the overall likelihood of U.S. interventions into armed conflicts has declined since 1946. However, when considering this metric as a signpost, it is important to consider that the current pattern of gradual decline may not continue in the future. It is entirely possible that U.S. relative capabilities will either hold steady or modestly rise as compared to other nations. U.S. decline may also accelerate if the U.S. economic base contracts or other countries grow more quickly than expected.

As a signpost, however, considering changes in U.S. relative capabilities may still be useful for military planners. Planners may be able

Figure 6.3
U.S. Relative Capabilities over Time, 1950–2007
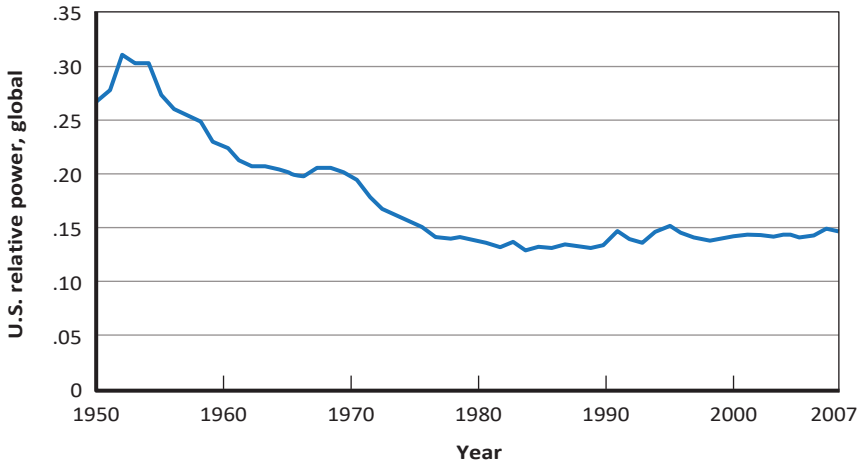
SOURCE: Singer, 1987.
NOTE: Although the cited source is from 1987, the COW project has updated these data through 2007.

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to adjust their expectations about where and when the United States will intervene by considering the U.S. position relative to that of key competitors and monitoring qualitative and quantitative changes in this position over time.

Table 6.7
U.S. Relative Capabilities as a Signpost

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
U.S. relative capabilities	U.S. relative military capabilities (CINC)	Interventions more likely when U.S. relative capabilities are greater, but relative capabilities have been declining	**U.S. Capabilities by Year**	**Probability of Intervention (%)**
			1946	27
			1970	20
			1989	16
			2012	16

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Attack on U.S. Soil

While only one of our cases included an attack on U.S. soil, and although this type of event has been very rare, we still flag it here as an important warning sign of future interventions because of the likelihood that any such attack will be followed by an intervention of some sort. As noted in the previous chapter, the two major attacks on U.S. soil in the last hundred years were followed, rather quickly, by a military intervention into an ongoing armed conflict. We cannot predict the likelihood that such a response would follow a future attack on the U.S. homeland, but we do expect it to be high. However, since such attacks are often difficult themselves to predict and since the military reaction is usually swift, this particular signpost may not provide planners with all that much time to prepare. A planning response to such an attack would also need to be nearly immediate. Our analysis did not find that attacks on U.S. interests or civilians outside the United States have triggered ground interventions, although some were met with air strikes or other military responses. Since the response to any attack on U.S. personnel or property overseas is likely context dependent, planners and policymakers may wish to treat these types of attacks as warning signs as well, especially if other factors that encourage interventions are also present.

Public and Elite Opinion

The case studies highlighted both public and elite opinion as having an impact on decisions about the initiation and the termination of U.S. interventions, particularly those into armed conflict. Public and elite opinion played a role, for example, in the decision to intervene in Somalia and also the timing of the withdrawal. However, neither appears to matter in all cases, largely because so many other factors operate simultaneously. The significant variation in the effect of public and elite opinion on the decision to intervene may explain why public opinion appears as an important signpost in case studies, but does not emerge as statistically significant in our statistical analysis.

There may be certain cases and situations where public or elite opinion can serve as a more powerful signpost. First, it is worth noting that based on a qualitative assessment of our cases, if there is strong

elite opinion against an intervention, the intervention is less likely to occur. Public opinion can also serve as a constraint on military interventions. Our case studies do not delve deeply into these constraining effects, since where public or elite opinion succeeds in stopping an intervention, there will be no observed intervention. Recent hesitancy to intervene in Syria may be interpreted as an example of public and elite resistance constraining the willingness of policymakers to launch an intervention into Syria. However, the power of public and elite opinion can also be seen in decisions about manpower and resourcing. This was true both in Vietnam and, more recently, in Iraq and Afghanistan.

On the other hand, strong elite support for an intervention may suggest a heightened likelihood that the intervention will take place. However, strong public support on its own, without other drivers and without simultaneous support among elites, may not be enough to trigger an intervention. In fact, the actual size of the effect of public attitudes on decisions about military operations is far from clearly defined.[5] However, in cases where there are many driving factors *and* strong public support for the intervention, public support may provide the final push that drives intervention forward. Military planners and policymakers, then, should stay apprised of public elite opinion on key conflicts, crises, and hot spots. Sudden shifts in either elite or public opinion (especially if both move together) in favor of an intervention may be an important warning sign for planners. Attention to public opinion should be especially high when there are other risk factors raising the likelihood of a possible U.S. intervention.

Signposts of Stability Operations Interventions

Location of the Target

U.S. decisions to launch new stability operation interventions appear to be heavily shaped by location. The United States is significantly more likely to conduct stability operations in Europe (2.8 times more likely) and the Middle East (2.0 times more likely) than in other regions

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[5] Larson and Savych, 2005.

Table 6.8
Location as a Signpost for Stability Operation Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
Location	Geographic locations	Interventions are more likely in Europe (2.8 times) and the Mideast (2 times) than in other regions	**Location**	**Probability of Intervention (%)**
			Europe	7.4
			Mideast	5.9
			Other Regions	2.7

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

(Table 6.8). Most likely, this reflects U.S. discomfort or unwillingness to permit instability in areas of strategic importance. Planners can likely expect that new stability operation interventions will continue to be more likely in areas of strategic importance, including Europe and the Middle East. In addition, as Asia continues to play an increasingly important role globally and for the United States (both for economic regions and to deter China), there may be an increased likelihood of stability operations in this region as well. Of course, this is not to say that stability operations will never occur elsewhere. Latin America, for instance, is also strategically important due to its geographic proximity to the United States and its economic relationship with the United States. However, our statistical analysis does not indicate that stability operations in this region are consistently more likely than those in less strategically important regions such as Africa. Military analysts and planners may choose to focus contingency planning efforts on conflict and post-conflict situations that occur in these specific regions.

Number of Refugees

As noted elsewhere in this report, one of the drivers of stability operations appears to be the existence of a humanitarian crisis and a large number of refugees. The United States sometimes intervenes in areas facing humanitarian crisis or struggling with high refugee flows, either to provide relief or to conduct more wide-ranging stability operations that include peacekeeping, among other activities. As a signpost, the

number of refugees from a conflict or crisis could be valuable as a leading indicator because it is observable and something that can be fairly easily tracked and monitored. While it may be difficult to precisely measure the number of refugees from a given conflict, it should be possible to assess the scale of the crisis and to take note of when the humanitarian situation becomes dire enough to demand external intervention. It is worth noting, however, that it is typically a confluence of factors that contribute to the decision to intervene in a humanitarian or refugee crisis. There is no one threshold of refugees above which an intervention is certain. However, monitoring the number of refugees can help military planners focus contingency planning on countries or regions with the highest likelihood of a new intervention and may also alert them to a new emerging crisis while sufficient planning time still exists. Table 6.9 shows the probability of an intervention at several different refugee totals, while Figure 6.4 shows the relationship between number of refugees and the likelihood of an intervention at all refugee values. The table illustrates that a substantial number of refugees is required before this factor alone drives a high intervention probability. In addition, the number of refugees rises much more quickly than the probability of an intervention (large increases in the number of refugees correspond to relatively small changes in the probability of an

Table 6.9
U.S. Relative Capabilities as a Signpost for Stability Operation Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
Number of refugees	Number of refugees	Interventions are more likely where there are large numbers of refugees	**Number of Refugees**	**Probability of Intervention (%)**
			0	0.8
			100	2.1
			1000	2.9
			10,000	4.1
			100,000	5.7
			1,000,000	7.7

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Figure 6.4
Probability of Stability Operation Based on Number of Refugees
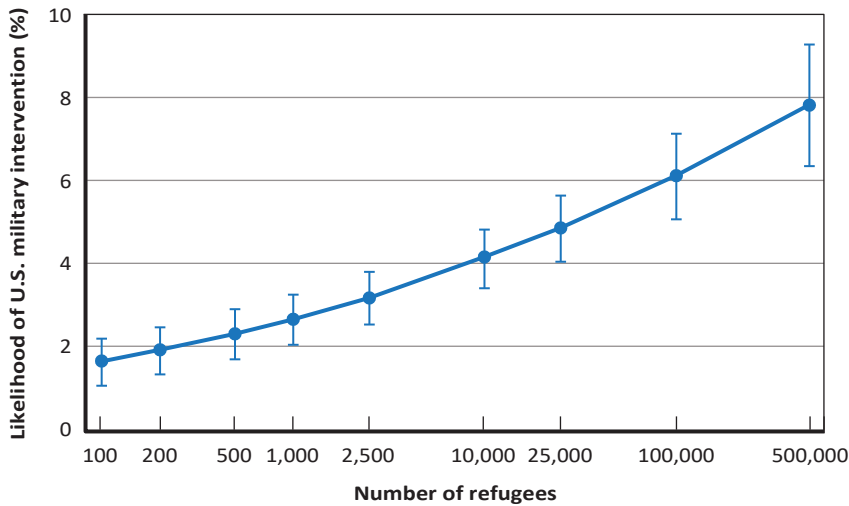
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-6.4*

intervention). However, a high or escalating flow of refugees may still be an important contributing factor driving the decision to launch a new stability operation. To place these numbers in the current context, the United Nations Human Rights Commission estimates the number of refugees from Syria at 4.8 million as of August 2016.[6] Importantly, the existence of a humanitarian crisis and the presence of a large number of refugees were characteristics of several of our stability operations intervention case studies as well, including the interventions in Bosnia (1992), Somalia (1992), and Lebanon (1982). This offers further support for the relevance of this factor as a predictor of stability operation interventions.

Involvement in the Combat Phase

As noted previously in this report, there are many instances where the United States intervenes in a combat operation and then remains to

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[6] Syria Regional Refugee Response, web site.

conduct stability operations. In many instances, interventions that are expected to be short combat operations end up being lengthy interventions that combine peacekeeping, reconstruction, and other sometimes ill-defined goals. In our case studies, this was the case in Korea and in Somalia (which was less lengthy), but it also occurred in Iraq in 2003 and in Afghanistan in 2001. Our statistical analysis confirms that U.S. involvement in the combat phase of an intervention significantly increases the likelihood that the United States will remain to conduct stability operations. Table 6.10 shows that while the likelihood of a U.S. stability operation in cases with no U.S. involvement in the combat phase is about 2.8 percent, the likelihood of a stability operation in cases with a prior U.S. combat intervention is 10.5 percent, an increase of about 3.8 times. Intervention in a prior combat phase, then, can serve as a valuable leading indicator. Once military planners see an initial combat intervention, it may make sense to begin considering what a subsequent stability operation would look like, including what tasks it would involve and how many resources it would require.

To answer this second question, that of the number of troops that the stability operations phase of an intervention would require, planners can again rely on the characteristics of the initial combat intervention. Specifically, our analysis shows that on average, for every 1,000 troops added to the combat intervention, planners should expect about 300 more troops overall in subsequent stability operation interventions. Figure 6.5 shows this linear relationship and also places a number of

Table 6.10
U.S. Involvement in Combat Phase as a Signpost for Stability Operation Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
			U.S Involvement	Probability of Intervention (%)
Involvement in combat phase	Presence of U.S. troops during combat phase	Interventions are about 3.8 times more likely when U.S. was present during combat phase		
			Yes	10.5
			No	2.8

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Figure 6.5
Size of Stability Operation Based on U.S. Involvement in Combat Phase
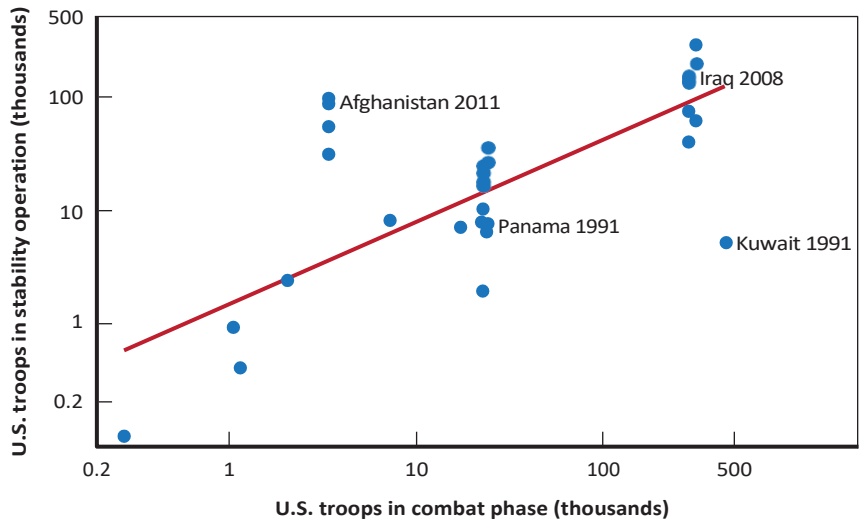
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-6.5*

interventions that had both a stability operation and a combat phase in relation to this line. Of course, the linear relationship is only a rough guideline and history gives many examples of stability operations that follow combat interventions but involve many fewer or many more troops. However, even having a rough tool for estimation may help planners better assess the possible resource demands for a follow-on intervention.

Military Assistance
The amount of military assistance from the United States to other nations also appears to be associated with the likelihood of a U.S. stability operation intervention in these countries. It is likely that military assistance spending serves as a proxy of sorts for the closeness of the relationship between the United States and the recipient as well as a marker of the investment that the United States has made in the recipient nation, both factors that may affect a decision to intervene.

Levels of military assistance are also easy to observe and track and can help planners identify those countries or crises where a stability operation intervention may be most likely, especially when combined with other factors, such as location, refugees, or previous U.S. involvement. Planners may also look for countries that are both facing a security crisis or conflict and have, in recent years, received an increasing amount of military assistance from the United States, as these may be possible sites of new U.S. interventions as well. Table 6.11 shows the probability of a stability operation intervention at various levels of military assistance, while Figure 6.6 shows this relationship between military assistance spending and intervention likelihood at all levels of military assistance spending. To give a sense of scale, in 2010 several countries received more than $1 billion in U.S. military assistance, including Israel, Iraq, and Afghanistan. In the same year, countries receiving around $10 million included Georgia, Thailand, and Peru. Countries receiving around $1 million in 2010 included Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Bangladesh. It is worth noting that relatively large increases in military assistance spending are required to increase the probability of a stability operation intervention. However as noted above, it may be a confluence of factors that ultimately drive the onset of a new stability operation intervention and military assistance spending is a clearly observable piece of this puzzle.

Table 6.11
U.S. Military Assistance as a Signpost for Stability Operation Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
			Military Assistance ($)	**Probability of Intervention (%)**
Military assistance	Military assistance spending	Interventions are more likely where U.S. historically given larger amounts of military assistance	$0	1.8
			$1 M	3.7
			$10 M	4.2
			$100 M	4.6
			$1 B	5.2

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Figure 6.6
Probability of Stability Operation Based on Military Assistance Spending
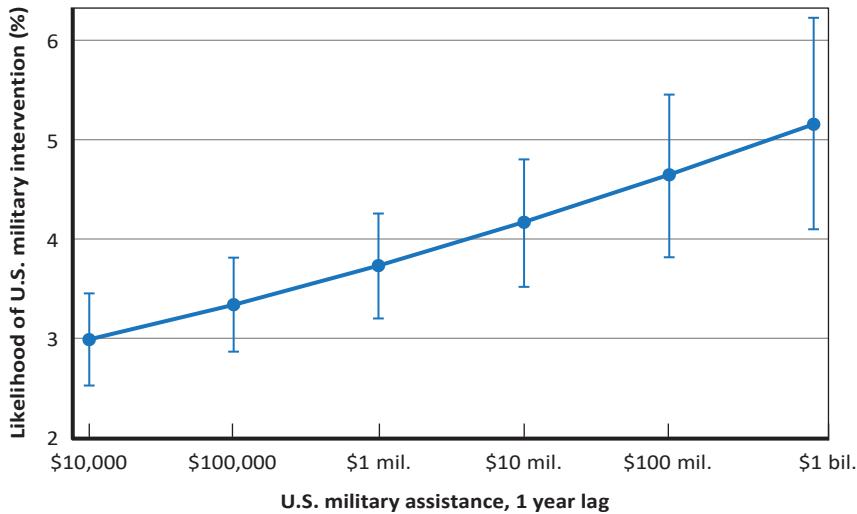
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
RAND *RR1831A-6.6*

Wealth of Target Nation

The wealth of the target nation, that is the nation into which the United States intervenes, may also serve as a signpost that can assist planners in estimating the possible size of a future intervention. Specifically, our analysis reveals that stability operation interventions tend to be larger in countries that are less wealthy, as measured by GDP per capita. Most likely, this relationship reflects the fact that wealthier countries may have better infrastructure and capabilities and so may require fewer U.S. troops to contribute to stability or reconstruction activities. As a signpost, the wealth of the target nation will not help planners anticipate a coming intervention but may help in estimating the likely size of a future intervention. Table 6.12 shows the projected size of a stability operation at various levels of GDP per capita in the target nation and Figure 6.7 shows this relationship between wealth and intervention size at all levels of target state GDP. As a point of

Table 6.12
Wealth (GDP per capita) as a Signpost for Stability Operation Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
			GDP per Capita in Target (1990 GK Dollars)	**Size of Stability Operations Intervention (Troops)**
Military assistance	Military assistance spending	Interventions are more likely where U.S. historically given larger amounts of military assistance	1,000	1,242
			5,000	580
			10,000	418
			30,000	249

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Gheary-Khamis (GK) dollars are a metric commonly used in economics for international comparisons. The nominal figures listed are generally well below current market exchange rates.

Figure 6.7
Size of Stability Operation Based on Wealth of Target Nation
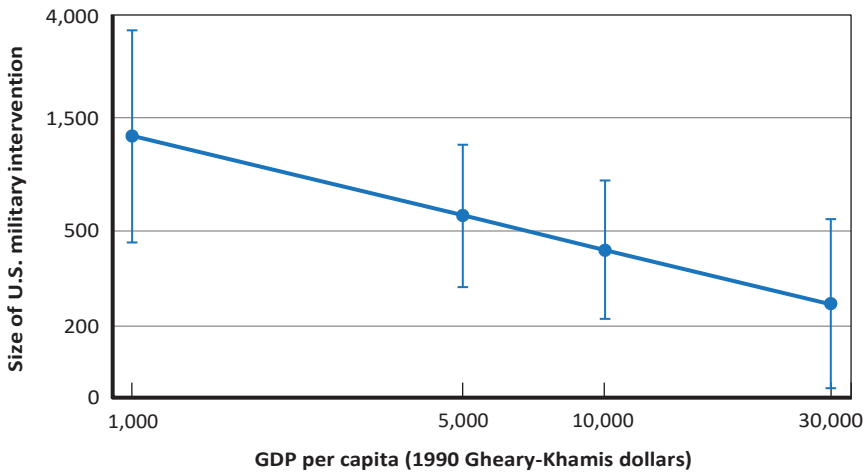
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-6.7*

reference, in 2009 Rwanda was close to $1,000 GDP per capita, Sri Lanka was close to $5,000 GDP per capita, Russia was close to $10,000 GDP per capita, and the United States close to $30,000.[7] Combined with information collected from other signposts, information on the target country's wealth, then, can provide valuable planning factors for future interventions.

Multinational Coalition

One additional signpost for stability operation interventions that emerged from our case studies was the presence of an international coalition, either through the U.N. or NATO. In several of our stability operation case studies, the presence of a U.N. or NATO coalition was a relatively significant factor in the decision to initiate the U.S. intervention. This may be because the international presence gives the U.S. intervention more international legitimacy, but it may also increase the domestic legitimacy and the domestic support for or buy-in to the intervention. Importantly, however, there are plenty of cases where a U.N. coalition was not sufficient to trigger a U.S. ground presence (e.g., Sudan). The presence of a NATO ally may be a stronger signal or signpost due to the nature of the U.S. relationship with other NATO countries, but even this is not a guarantee. When a NATO ally becomes involved in a major intervention or when there is a large multinational coalition intervening in a post-conflict or conflict situation, military planners and policymakers should likely take note and at least consider what a U.S. contribution to that effort might look like and require.

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[7]   Figures based on 1990 Gheary-Khamis dollars, a metric commonly used in economics for international comparisons. The nominal figures listed are generally well below current market exchange rates. The 2009 year was chosen arbitrarily, as one of the latest for which comprehensive economic data were available from the data sources we employed for a full range of countries at different income levels. There are other sources of GDP per capita data which provide different figures, but the source we use is traditionally used in statistical work of the kind presented here. Finally, these specific examples are provided as a way of putting the probabilities in Table 6.12 into context.

Signposts of Deterrent Interventions

Degree of Threat

Although new deterrent interventions are relatively rare, the degree of threat appears to be a significant predictor of when and where these interventions may occur. There are several ways that the severity of a given threat may be measured, including the existence of a territorial claim by one state against another, an imbalance of capabilities between two states, or a history of militarized disputes between two countries. In our analysis, we combined these different measures of threat into an index.[8] This threat index is fairly straightforward to calculate and may be a valuable planning tool for military analysts because it provides a simple way to combine several different measures of threat into one metric that can be used to assess, rank, and evaluate the severity of security threats in different regions and at different points in time. Table 6.13 shows that likelihood of a new deterrent intervention at three values of the threat index. To put these values in context, in 2005 Switzerland had a "1" on this threat scale, while Vietnam had a "4" and Israel had a "6." While the likelihood of a new deterrent intervention remains low even at high threat levels, an increase from 1 to 6 does increase the likelihood of a new deterrent intervention by about 40

Table 6.13
Threat Index as a Signpost for Deterrent Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
Degree of threat	Threat index (constructed)	Interventions are more likely as the degree of threat rises	**Threat Index**	**Probability of Intervention (%)**
			1	0.055
			4	0.069
			6	0.076

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

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[8] States received one point each for having a neighbor with a large capabilities advantage and a lack of joint democracy, and two points each for a high salience territorial claim and a history of militarized disputes.

Table 6.14
Territorial Claims as a Signpost for Deterrent Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
Degree of threat	Existence of territorial claims	Interventions are larger when territorial claims exist	**Territorial Claim**	**Size of Deterrent Intervention (Troops)**
			Yes	1,910
			No	407

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

percent, a relatively sizeable increase in percentage terms. Planners can use the threat index presented here to monitor the threat presented by specific rivals or potential rivals and focus planning efforts on those countries where the threat is the greatest or where the threat seems to be increasing most rapidly. Countries that scored particularly high on this threat index in recent years included Israel, South Korea, and Pakistan.

One dimension of the threat index seems to be particularly important to predicting and planning for future deterrent interventions: territorial claims. As noted elsewhere, we define territorial claims as formal, contested claims made by one state for part or all of the territory of another state. While territorial claims are part of the threat index described above, it also appears to have an independent effect on the size of the deterrent intervention. According to our models (and as shown in Table 6.14), while the average deterrent intervention in response to territorial claims has about 1,910 troops, those that respond to some other kind of threat have an average of only 407 troops. For planners, this analysis suggests that when an intervention involves a territorial claim, it may need to involve significantly more troops.

Relationship with the United States

A second key signpost for the likelihood and size of deterrent interventions is the nature of the relationship between the target nation and the United States, as measured by the existence of a defensive alliance.

Table 6.15
Relationship with the United States as a Signpost for Deterrent Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
Degree of threat	Defensive alliance	Interventions into close allies are about 1.9 times as likely as those into non-allies	U.S. Ally	Probability of Intervention (%)
			Yes	8.7
			No	4.7

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

As expected, the United States is significantly more likely to start new deterrent interventions in key allies. As shown in Table 6.15, while the likelihood of a new deterrent intervention is about 4.7 percent in non-allies, this likelihood rises to 8.7 percent for key defensive allies. Planners may, therefore, choose to focus their attention and their planning for future potential deterrent interventions on close allies facing significant threats, rather than non-allies where deterrent interventions are less likely.

Deterrent interventions into key U.S. allies also tend to be significantly larger than those into non-allies. Specifically, our analysis suggests that deterrent interventions into allies tend to be about 1.7 times as large as those into non-allies. This is different than stability operations and interventions into armed conflicts where the size of U.S. interventions tends to be smaller when conducted into allies. While in the latter two instances the smaller size of U.S. interventions likely reflects the greater capabilities of partner nations, in the case of deterrence, the United States may be more willing to deploy large forces to protect key partners facing a significant threat than they are to deploy similarly large deterrent forces to weaker partners. Furthermore, close allies may provide a more hospitable and safe environment for deterrent forces that makes the deployment of a large force a more strategically appealing decision. Planners can use this metric to estimate the likely resources that will be needed to execute effective deterrent interventions in different types of countries facing different types of threats.

Military Assistance

Military assistance spending is a signpost for future deterrent interventions just as it was for stability operations interventions. As noted previously, military assistance spending can be a useful leading indicator because it is easy to observe and track. Military analysts and planners can use trends in military assistance spending to identify those countries where the United States appears to have a more significant vested interest and where deterrent interventions may be increasingly likely. Table 6.16 shows the likelihood of deterrent interventions at various levels of military assistance and Figure 6.8 shows this relationship at all values of U.S. military assistance spending. As noted elsewhere, the overall likelihood of a deterrent intervention is very low, but the values shown in the table indicate that increasing amounts of military assistance do increase this likelihood. Notably, the biggest jump is that between no military assistance and $1 M USD in assistance, although the likelihood does continue to increase as assistance spending rises further. The increase from $1 to $25 M USD, for instance, increases the likelihood of a deterrent intervention by about 34 percent (although the total likelihood of an intervention remains low). As noted above, in 2010 several countries received more than $1 billion in U.S. military assistance, including Israel, Iraq, and Afghanistan. In the same year, countries receiving around $10 million included Georgia, Thailand,

Table 6.16
Military Assistance as a Signpost for Deterrent Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
U.S. military assistance spending	Military assistance spending	Interventions are more likely where U.S. has given large amounts of military assistance in prior years	**Military Assistance ($)**	**Probability of Intervention (%)**
			$0	0.14
			$1 M	0.50
			$10 M	0.62
			$25 M	0.67
			$100 M	0.76

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Figure 6.8
Probability of Deterrent Intervention Based on Military Assistance Spending
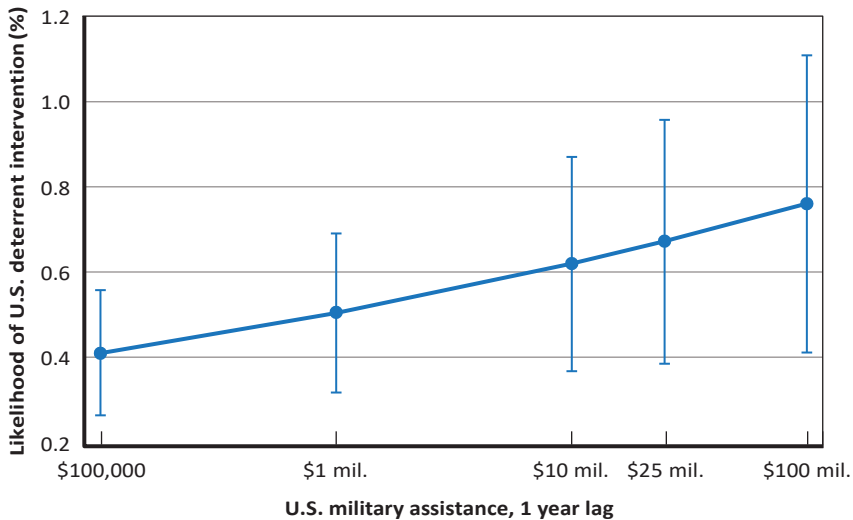
SOURCE: RAND analysis.
RAND *RR1831A-6.8*

and Peru. Countries receiving around $1 million in 2010 included Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Bangladesh.

Rate of U.S. Economic Growth

Another signpost for deterrent interventions is a characteristic not of the target nation, but of the United States, specifically the rate of U.S. economic growth. Table 6.17 shows the likelihood of a deterrent intervention at several different GDP growth rates. As the GDP growth rate rises from 2.5 to 6.5 percent, the likelihood of a deterrent intervention increases from 0.22 to 0.55, an increase in likelihood of about 2.5 times. Planners can use changes in the U.S. GDP growth rate to gauge the overall likelihood of U.S. deterrent interventions. While certainly other factors will play a big role in determining where and when the United States initiates new deterrent interventions, U.S. economic growth is also a contributing factor, likely because it affects the available resources and willingness to expand U.S. military activities. To put

Table 6.17
U.S. Economic Growth as a Signpost for Deterrent Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
U.S. economic rate	Rate of U.S. GDP growth	Interventions are larger when U.S. GDP growth is rapid	**Rate of U.S. GDP Growth**	**Probability of Intervention (%)**
			0.0	0.12
			2.5	0.22
			5.0	0.42
			6.5	0.55

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Table 6.17 in context, the GDP growth rate was 3.8 percent in 2004, –2.8 percent in 2009, and 2.3 percent in 2013. Thus, based on GDP growth alone, new deterrent interventions may appear less likely than in periods with higher growth in the mid-2000s. Of course, other factors, such as the rise of more serious threats from China and Russia may also play a role in determining future U.S. deterrent interventions.

Signposts for Clustering

Recent Interventions in Target Country

The clustering analysis also suggests some important signposts for future interventions. Specifically, as already noted in Chapter Four, our analysis shows that previous U.S. interventions do appear likely to occur in space-time clusters. At least part of this effect is driven by the fact that new interventions become increasingly likely when the United States has intervened in the same country in the past 10 years. Table 6.18 shows that the probability of a new intervention increases from 0.1 percent to 12 percent if the United States has intervened in the country in the past 10 years. This result applies across types of interventions. While there are certainly many interventions that occur in new countries, focusing attention on countries that have been the sites of past interventions would likely help planners better anticipate where future interventions might be needed.

Table 6.18
Recent Previous Interventions as a Signpost for New Interventions

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
Recent previous interventions	U.S. involvement in previous intervention in same country past 10 years	Interventions more likely when U.S. has intervened in same country in past 10 years	**Recent Previous Intervention**	**Probability of Intervention (%)**
			Yes	12.0
			No	0.1

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Recent Interventions in Proximate Countries

The clustering analysis also suggested that new interventions are also more likely when there have been recent interventions in proximate countries (within five years and 1,000 km). This effect appears to hold for all interventions, but is strongest where the number of troops involved in nearby recent or ongoing interventions is smaller. The existence of recent proximate interventions can also serve as a signpost and leading indicator of future interventions. Countries that are proximate to or neighboring countries where the United States has intervened in the recent past should be considered to have greater likelihood of future U.S. intervention and should be a focal point for military planners and analysts seeking to identify sites where future interventions may be likely. If other risk factors also exist, such as an ongoing conflict, high refugee flows, or a severe external threat, then the likelihood of a future intervention may rise further. Table 6.19 highlights how the likelihood of a new intervention changes based on the existence of a recent proximate intervention and the size of that intervention. Note that this effect varies based on whether there has been a previous U.S. intervention in the country or not. However, in either case, the existence of recent proximate interventions does increase the chance of future interventions and thus can serve as a signpost and planning tool for military planners.

Table 6.19
Recent Nearby Interventions as a Signpost for New Interventions
(Where There Has Also Been a Prior U.S. Intervention)

Warning Sign	Proxy Variable	Direction of Effect	Magnitude of Effect/ Relevant Range of Variable	
Recent nearby interventions	U.S. involvement in recent intervention in nearby country in past 5 years	Interventions more likely when U.S. has intervened in a nearby country in past 5 years	**Recent Nearby Intervention**	**Probability of Intervention (%)**
			No	12
			Yes, 2K troops	19
			Yes, 10K troops	15
			Yes, 20K troops	14
			Yes, 100K troops	13

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Summary and Implications

This chapter has discussed the key signposts of future interventions that have emerged from our statistical and case study analysis. It has also provided specific metrics that will allow military analysts and planners to make use of these signposts to identify those locations and regions where specific types of interventions may be most likely as well as to estimate the possible size of these interventions. By tracking these specific signposts and using the metrics provided in this chapter, Army planners can create a sort of dashboard of intervention warning signs that can provide early warning of possible future interventions and facilitate advance preparation and planning.

Table 6.20 provides a list of the key signposts for each type of intervention. As noted throughout, it is rare that a single factor will be sufficient to draw the United States into a new military intervention. Instead, it is usually several factors working simultaneously that results in a new intervention. Planners and analysts can use these different signposts together, looking for those crises, conflicts, countries, or threats where there seems to be a heightened likelihood for a U.S. intervention on several different dimensions and then focus their planning and preparation on those specific scenarios. Furthermore, assessing and

Table 6.20
Signposts of Future Interventions by Intervention Type

Interventions into Armed Conflict	Stability Operations	Deterrent Interventions
• Relationship with the U.S. • Destructiveness of war • Previous intervention • War weariness • U.S. capabilities • Elite and public opinion • Attack on U.S. soil	• Location of target • Number of refugees • Wealth of target nation • Involvement in combat phase • Number of troops in combat phase • Military assistance • Presence of multi-national coalition	• Degree of threat • Territorial claims • Relationship with the U.S. • Military assistance • Rate of U.S. economic growth

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

tracking the number of these locations over time could give planners a better sense of the possible future demand for U.S. intervention forces. Planners can also use the signposts and metrics presented here to define more quantitatively the characteristics of those countries, crises, conflicts, or threats that are most likely to lead to U.S. interventions and then use these generic types for planning purposes. The metrics in this chapter also assist planners in estimating the size of the intervention. Also, as noted elsewhere in this report, many of these signposts are reflections of key U.S. interests. Thus, even while focusing on the signposts presented here, policymakers and planners should also consider U.S. interests more generally when assessing the potential for future intervention in various locations.

Of course there will still be surprises. In some cases, the signposts for U.S. interventions will exist, but no intervention will occur. This is because the decision to intervene is not a mechanical decision, but rather a nuanced one based on a number of factors. Not only do the signposts matter as a set, but contextual factors will always also be important. Syria is a good example of a case where several (though not all) signposts are present, but no major ground intervention has occurred. While the war weariness signpost does suggest a reduced likelihood of intervention, additional contextual factors such as the involvement of Russia have also likely played a role. Despite this limitation, a reliance

on the signposts presented here can help planners and policymakers better anticipate and prepare for future interventions by giving them a set of metrics to track and assess over time.

To illustrate how the signposts presented in this chapter might be used by military planners, we consider explicitly how well our signposts would have predicted several of our case study interventions, as summarized in Tables 6.21 through 6.23. One key observation is that while our signposts do a fairly good job of predicting some interventions, they are less effective at predicting others. In general, this is not surprising, as some of the cases were selected explicitly because they were poorly predicted by our statistical models, which were the source of many of our signposts. Our signposts seem to do a better job of predicting deterrent interventions than stability operation interventions or interventions into armed conflict. Our key signposts for deterrent interventions (summarized in Table 6.21) were generally present in each of the interventions noted below, although to varying degrees. The deterrent intervention into Korea seems to be the most clearly predicted, followed by the deterrence conducted in Taiwan. The most recent intervention in the Baltics is perhaps the least well predicted, followed by the deterrent intervention in Kuwait in the 1990s, although even in these cases some key signposts were present.[9]

Our signposts for stability operation interventions, summarized in Table 6.22, would also have provided accurate warning signs for a number of interventions that did occur. Interventions in Bosnia and Afghanistan following the combat phase of OEF seem the most strongly predicted, but even the second phase of the intervention in Somalia might have appeared likely from the perspective of the signposts here. The Lebanese intervention was less clearly predicted.[10]

For interventions into armed conflict, our signposts (summarized in Table 6.23) appear to do the best job at predicting the interventions

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[9] This is in keeping with the results from our statistical models that were used to select these cases, with Taiwan an example of a relatively well-predicted case, and the Baltics an example of a relatively poorly predicted case, as summarized in Table 5.1.

[10] This is again in keeping with the results from the statistical models summarized in Table 5.1, indicating for example that the Bosnia case was relatively well predicted by the models, while the Lebanon case was relatively poorly predicted.

Table 6.21
Key Signposts and U.S. Deterrence Interventions

	Persian Gulf 1990s	Korea	Baltics (Operation Atlantic Resolve)	Taiwan (1959–1979)
Close relationship with the U.S.	Present	Strongly Present	Strongly Present	Present
High degree of threat	Present	Strongly Present	Present	Strongly Present
Territorial claim	Strongly Present	Present	Weakly Present	Strongly Present
High prior U.S. military assistance	Present	Strongly Present	Present	Strongly Present
High rate of U.S. economic growth	Weakly Present	Strongly Present	Weakly Present	Present

■ Strongly Present ■ Present ■ Weakly Present ☐ Not Present

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Coding reflects status in year of intervention initiation.

Table 6.22
Key Signposts and U.S. Stability Operation Interventions

	Bosnia (IFOR/SFOR/UNFOR)	Somalia (UNOSOM II)	Lebanese Civil War (MNF I and MNF II)	Afghanistan (OEF)
Intervention in Middle East or Europe	Strongly Present	Not Present	Strongly Present	Not Present
High number of refugees	Present	Strongly Present	Weakly Present	Strongly Present
U.S. involvement in combat phase	Present	Strongly Present	Not Present	Strongly Present
High prior U.S. military assistance	Not Present	Not Present	Strongly Present	Not Present
Presence of multinational coalition	Strongly Present	Strongly Present	Present	Present

■ Strongly Present ■ Present ■ Weakly Present ☐ Not Present

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Coding reflects status in year of intervention initiation.

Table 6.23
Key Signposts and U.S. Interventions into Armed Conflict

	Korea	Vietnam	Somalia (Operation Restore Hope)	Dominican Republic (Operation Power Pack)	Afghanistan (OEF)
Close relationship with the U.S.	Present	Weakly Present	Not Present	Strongly Present	Not Present
Highly destructive war	Not Present	Present	Weakly Present	Not Present	Present
Lack of war weariness constraint	Not Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Previous intervention	Strongly Present	Not Present	Not Present	Strongly Present	Not Present
High U.S. relative capabilities	Strongly Present	Present	Present	Present	Weakly Present
Elite and public opinion support intervention	Strongly Present	Present	Weakly Present	Present	Strongly Present
Attack on U.S. soil	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present	Strongly Present

■ Strongly Present ■ Present ■ Weakly Present □ Not Present

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

NOTE: Coding reflects status in year of intervention initiation.

in the Dominican Republic, followed by Korea. Several signposts were also strongly present in the case of Vietnam and Afghanistan (OEF). The signposts were less effective at identifying Operation Restore Hope in Somalia. The U.S. intervention in Somalia seems more anomalous, both in terms of our signposts and U.S. interests, perhaps reflecting a humanitarian interest that has historically been more anomalous in motivating U.S. intervention behavior.[11]

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[11] These illustrations are also generally in keeping with the results of our statistical models, shown in Table 5.1, with cases such as the Dominican Republic well predicted by our models, and cases such as Somalia poorly predicted. The Afghanistan case differs, however, due to the inclusion of the signposts for elite and public opinion and an attack on U.S. soil, which were not included in our statistical analysis but instead were developed from our case studies.

Implications for Army Planners

The research presented in this report has included a historical analysis of past U.S. ground interventions, statistical analysis to identify the key factors that shape the likelihood and size of three key types of U.S. ground interventions (into armed conflict, stability operations, and deterrence), case study analysis to further explore issues such as lead time and duration and resource demands and constraints, and a discussion of key signposts that can be used by Army planners and policymakers to anticipate future interventions before they occur. In this chapter, we highlight some of the key findings and their implications for Army planners.

Signposts of Future Interventions

The most valuable contribution of this report to Army planners and to the policymaking community more generally is the identification of signposts and signpost metrics that can be used to anticipate future interventions and more importantly to identify and track those countries that seem to be at highest risk for future ground interventions. Tables 7.1 through 7.4 provide a summary of some of the key signposts for each of the intervention types. As noted previously, these signposts and metrics create a dashboard that Army planners can use to monitor the likelihood of future interventions in various regions or crises as well as to identify hot spots where future ground interventions seem especially likely. Significant changes in one or a set of the key metrics included in the dashboard would provide planners with early warning

about the possibility of a future intervention, which they could respond to by initiating early planning efforts or new training exercises to better prepare personnel for the possibility of such a future intervention.

Importantly, interventions are typically driven by several factors operating in concert rather than by a single factor. Thus, it will be important for planners to look at the full set of signposts, rather than any one in order to more accurately assess the likelihood of an intervention in a given country or circumstance. Reading all the metrics on the dashboards below as a set, then, may be the most reliable and appropriate way to use the signposts presented in this report to anticipate the likelihood of a future intervention or to identify countries and regions where there seems to be a heightened probability for a U.S. intervention.

The signposts presented in this report also suggest a number of markers or indicators that may be especially valuable early warning indicators signaling a potential future intervention. These include strength of relationship with the United States (including alliances, military assistance, and location), the severity of the conflict or degree of threat inherent in a crisis (including especially territorial claims), previous interventions in a target country, relative U.S. capabilities, and alignment of an intervention with U.S. strategic interests. In addition to metrics that can be used to identify the likelihood of an intervention in specific regions or conflicts, Army planners can use the signposts identified in our analysis to create a set of actionable markers, or specific trends, events, or indicators which are easily observable by military planners and analysts.[1] Below we list a set of possible markers and some countries, conflicts, crises, or regions that these markers might highlight as potential hotspots for future interventions when applied to the current context. It is worth noting, however, that these are only the most obvious manifestations of these trends. Many other possibilities could trigger new interventions. Possible markers include

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[1] We intend the signposts to serve as heuristic tools and guides for Army strategists for planners, rather than deterministic predictors.

- **New conflicts or crises affecting partners (e.g., allies, military assistance recipients, location).** *Continued spread of the ISIS threat may trigger new U.S. interventions in partners in the Mideast and Southeast Asia.*
- **New threats, especially including territorial claims, against partners and allies.** *This marker suggests a need to be especially attentive to the potential demand for a U.S. deterrent intervention in response to Russian aggression and expansion against its neighbors. It also suggests the potential for additional U.S. interventions in East Asia to contain China.*
- **Conflicts or crises in countries where the United States has intervened before.** *Conflicts or crises in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, or Central America may trigger repeat interventions. Threats such as ISIS, as well as escalating criminal violence in Central America, could be the proximate trigger of such events.*
- **Conflicts with high battle deaths and/or large refugee flows.** *The obvious example here is Syria. While the United States has not sent large numbers of ground troops into Syria, there are a number of warning signs that suggest that this could be a possibility.*
- **Involvement of U.S. troops in combat phase of conflict (often leads to long running stability operations or deterrence).** *This signpost suggests continued interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria.*
- **Conflicts or crises in countries geographically proximate to the sites of other recent U.S. interventions.** *An increase in conflicts or crises in countries in the Middle East or South Asia may be likely to lead to new interventions, especially if policymakers think such an intervention is needed to protect partner governments in Iraq and Afghanistan.*
- **Strong shifts in elite or public opinion in support of an intervention (or conversely, against an intervention or demanding withdrawal).** *Right now, there appears to be little public support for large interventions of any kind, but our analysis suggests this constraint will decline. At that point, shifts in public and elite opinion in favor of specific interventions may be especially important in motivating future interventions.*

Table 7.1
Key Signposts and Metrics for Interventions into Armed Conflict

Signpost	Metric	Substantive Effect
Relationship with U.S.	Defensive alliance	Intervention into U.S. ally is **2x more likely** than non-ally, but interventions in non-allies tend to be **larger (4,350 vs. 280 personnel**, on average other factors held constant) *Likelihood: 32% if ally; 16% if not*
Destructiveness of conflict	Cumulative battle deaths	Likelihood of intervention **rises from 15% to 30% as battle deaths rise from 1,000 to 60,000** *Example, battle death figures through 2015: Syria 145,233; Ukraine 4,946*
Previous intervention	Previous U.S. intervention in target	If U.S. intervened in past, intervention is **6.5x more likely** *Likelihood: 35.6% if yes; 5.5% if no*
War weariness	Years since U.S. combat deaths	Interventions **6% less likely for ~9 years** after significant U.S. combat deaths
U.S. capabilities	Relative military capabilities	Intervention **less likely** as relative U.S. capabilities decline
Elite & public opinion	Elite attitudes/ public opinion	Elite/public support **increases** likelihood of intervention

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Finally, while it is important to identify key signposts, it is also worth again noting factors that do not seem to serve as good signposts of future interventions according to our analysis. First, the number of ongoing conflicts in the world does not appear to be a good predictor of the likelihood of a U.S. intervention. This is somewhat counterintuitive, but is an important point. Just because the number of ongoing conflicts in the world may increase, this does not necessarily mean that the number of U.S. interventions will also increase. On the other hand, even a decrease in ongoing conflicts, may not mean a decrease in the number of U.S. interventions. Instead, where conflicts occur matters more than their aggregate number. Another factor that does not seem to matter is domestic political dynamics, such as the party in control of the executive branch, the number of years until a presidential election, or presidential approval ratings, although we did find some support in

Table 7.2
Key Signposts and Metrics for Stability Operations Interventions

Signpost	Metric	Substantive Effect
Involvement in combat phase	U.S. involvement in combat phase	Intervention is about **4x more likely** if U.S. was involved in combat phase *Likelihood: 10.5% if yes; 2.8% if no*
Number of troops in combat phase	Number of U.S. troops in combat phase	Size of stability operations **increases about 300 troops** for every 1,000 troops in combat operation
Military assistance	U.S. military assistance spending	Intervention **more likely** if U.S. has provided military assistance in past *Likelihood: 1.8% if no assistance in prior year, 3.7% if $1,000,000 in prior year*
Number of refugees humanitarian crisis	Cumulative number of refugees	Intervention **more likely** as number of refugees rises *Likelihood: 0.8% w/no refugees, 5.7% if 100,000 refugees*
Location of target country	Region of target state	Interventions in **Europe (2.8x) and Mideast (2x) are more likely** than other regions *Likelihood: Europe 7.4%; Mideast 5.9%; Others 2.7%*
Multinational coalition	Presence of multinational coalition	**Increases** likelihood of intervention

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

case studies for the role of public and elite opinion. This runs counter to some arguments that characteristics of the domestic political sphere, including the party holding the presidency and the individual executive holding the position of president at the time, do affect the likelihood of new U.S. interventions. However, these other studies tended to look at a more general set of interventions (beyond ground interventions) and at much shorter time periods. It may be that domestic politics matters at certain points in time or for certain presidents, but has less of an effect when a longer time period or only ground interventions are considered.

Table 7.3
Key Signposts and Metrics for Deterrent Interventions

Signpost	Metric	Substantive Effect
Degree of threat	Territorial claims	Interventions **more likely and larger (1,910 troops v. 407 troops)** where there is a territorial claim
Relationship with U.S.	Defensive alliance	Interventions into U.S. allies are **2x more likely** than those into non-allies *Likelihood: 8.7% if allies; 4.7% if not*
Military assistance	U.S. military assistance spending	Likelihood of intervention **more than 3x as military assistance increases from $0 to $1 mill** *Likelihood: 0.14% at $0 to 0.50% at $1 mill*
Rate of U.S. economic growth	Rate of U.S. GDP growth	Likelihood of intervention increases **nearly 2x as U.S. GDP growth rises from 0% to 2.5%** *Likelihood: 0.12% at 0% growth to 0.22% at 2.5% growth*
Involvement in combat phase	U.S. presence in combat phase	Intervention **more likely** if U.S. was involved in previous combat phase

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Table 7.4
Key Signposts and Metrics for Clustering of Interventions

Signpost	Metric	Substantive Effect
Recent previous U.S. intervention in target	U.S. intervention in target within past 10 years	Interventions **more likely** in countries with recent previous U.S. intervention *Likelihood: 12% with recent intervention vs. 0.1% without*
Recent nearby U.S. intervention	U.S. intervention within 1,000 km of target in past 5 years	Interventions **more likely** in countries with recent nearby interventions. *Effect largest when nearby interventions are smaller*

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Signposts and Potential Future Interventions

To further illustrate the potential utility of these signposts, we also considered to what extent they would predict a hypothetical future U.S. intervention in several ongoing conflicts, post-conflict environments, and opportunities for deterrence. Our selection of these cases and coding of the signposts are intended to be purely illustrative, and may change quickly as these situations evolve. Further, we emphasize that in presenting these hypothetical future cases, our analysis does not allow us to place a specific probability on the likelihood of a future intervention. Instead, we use the analysis below to illustrate which and how many of our signposts would point toward specific future interventions and overall which interventions would seem relatively more or less likely based on the signposts presented here.

At least among the three hypothetical cases listed in Table 7.5, Ukraine, Yemen, and Syria, near-term U.S. intervention directly into the combat phase of these conflicts would appear to be unlikely. Of the three cases, intervention in Syria would appear to be the most likely, owing to the massive destruction and regional effects of that conflict, but even there most signposts would suggest a low likelihood of substantial U.S. intervention. The lack of a close relationship with the U.S.

Table 7.5
Key Signposts and Hypothetical U.S. Interventions into Armed Conflict

	Ukraine	Yemen	Syria
Close relationship with the U.S.	Weakly Present	Not Present	Not Present
Highly destructive war	Weakly Present	Present	Strongly Present
Lack of war weariness constraint	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present
Previous intervention	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present
High U.S. relative capabilities	Weakly Present	Weakly Present	Weakly Present
Elite and public opinion support intervention	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present
Attack on U.S. soil	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present

■ Strongly Present ■ Present ■ Weakly Present ☐ Not Present

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

in each of these cases, even in the case of Ukraine where there is a weak relationship, is likely an important factor in the apparently low likelihood of an intervention in these cases.

The potential for future U.S. stability operation interventions appear notably higher than those for interventions into armed conflicts. In the three cases illustrated in Table 7.6, only in the Central African Republic would our signposts suggest that intervention is particularly unlikely. In the event that Syria eventually reaches a post-conflict phase, U.S. participation in efforts to stabilize the country would seem to be relatively highly predicted, due to its location, high number of refugees, prior U.S. involvement and the presence of a multinational coalition. U.S. involvement in a Libyan stability operation also should not be ruled out based on these illustrative signposts. It is worth noting that in both cases, the likelihood of U.S. intervention appears to be restrained by the lack of international consensus and only a weak multinational support for such operations.

New deterrent interventions, at least in the cases illustrated in Table 7.7, do not appear particularly likely, though some cannot be ruled out. While none of our signposts would suggest a high likelihood of a deterrence mission to Vietnam to deter Chinese aggression, the potential for deterrent interventions in Ukraine to deter Russia or Saudi Arabia to deter Iran are more nuanced. In Ukraine, the lack of

Table 7.6
Key Signposts and Hypothetical U.S. Stability Operations Interventions

	Syria	Libya	Central African Republic
Intervention in Middle East or Europe	Strongly Present	Strongly Present	Not Present
High number of refugees	Strongly Present	Present	Strongly Present
U.S. involvement in combat phase	Weakly Present	Present	Not Present
High prior U.S. military assistance	Not Present	Weakly Present	Not Present
Presence of multinational coalition	Weakly Present	Weakly Present	Weakly Present

■ Strongly Present ■ Present ■ Weakly Present □ Not Present
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Table 7.7
Key Signposts and Hypothetical Potential U.S. Deterrent Interventions

	Ukraine	Vietnam	Saudi Arabia
Close relationship with the U.S.	Weakly Present	Weakly Present	Present
High degree of threat	Strongly Present	Weakly Present	Weakly Present
Territorial claim	Strongly Present	Weakly Present	Not Present
High prior U.S. military assistance	Present	Not Present	Strongly Present
High rate of U.S. economic growth	Weakly Present	Weakly Present	Weakly Present

■ Strongly Present   ■ Present   ■ Weakly Present   □ Not Present
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

a close U.S. security or political commitment to defend Ukraine is of course the primary indicator that such an intervention is unlikely, despite the clear threat the country faces from Russia and the recent expansion in U.S. assistance to Ukraine. In Saudi Arabia, the U.S. relationship and commitment is stronger and level of prior military assistance higher, but the threat from Iran or other adversaries that the country might face does not appear to be acute. If that threat perception were to change, the United States could again intervene to deter aggression against Saudi Arabia, as the United States did in the 1990s.

Other Key Insights for Army Planners

While the identification of signposts for future interventions is likely the most actionable contribution of this report, our analysis suggests a number of other important insights for Army planners and planning.

The use of different unit types varies by intervention activity and size.
Our analysis of unit type data suggested that unit type use varies by intervention activity and size. Looking across all types of interventions and over time, sustainment, engineer, and combat arms units are most often used. Combat arms units play a role in all intervention types.

Fires, aviation, and intelligence units seem to be used less often, but they fit niche demands. The use of SOF units, which includes both Ranger and Green Beret units as well as PSYOP units and civil affairs units, has increased substantially over time, even as use of other unit types has fluctuated and fallen. SOF units are used across different types of interventions, but are particularly prevalent in advisory missions. By contrast, aviation and engineer units appear most used in humanitarian missions. It is also notable that even as the types of interventions conducted by U.S. personnel has changed over the past few decades, demand for most unit types has remained fairly constant. For planners, these observations suggest that regardless of the types of interventions that the United States expects to conduct in the future, there will still be demand that reaches across unit types. No particular unit type appears to be underused, and it appears that different types of units may be most stressed in different types of interventions.

Although each type of intervention has a unique set of factors that contribute to its likelihood and size, some factors matter across all intervention types.
One particularly important factor that appears relevant for all types of interventions is the relationship between the United States and the target country. The United States is consistently more likely to intervene in armed conflicts, for stability operations, and for deterrence when the target is a close U.S. ally or partner. This relationship is strongest for those partners with a defensive alliance with the United States but extends more broadly to include partners who have received substantial military assistance from the United States in the past, countries that are located near our key allies, and countries where the United States has already been involved in a previous intervention. As a result, simply monitoring the conditions in key allies and partners, broadly defined, may be one way to identify those countries or crises where a U.S. intervention appears most likely.

U.S. capabilities, particularly relative to other states, seems to be another factor that affects the likelihood of more than one type of intervention, specifically interventions into armed conflicts and deterrence interventions. In strategic contexts in which the United States is

overwhelmingly the most powerful actor, these types of interventions seem more likely. This may be partly because there is a greater likelihood of success when the United States is overwhelmingly the most powerful actor, but also because in some cases U.S. involvement may be required for mission success. Our case studies offered several key examples of such interventions, including the United States contribution to MNF I and MNF II in Lebanon and the U.S. intervention in Bosnia. However, it is also worth noting that as other countries catch up to the United States in terms of military capabilities, U.S. relative capabilities may decline, as may the U.S. willingness to intervene.

Involvement in previous interventions, either in the form of past intervention or a preexisting involvement in a combat phase, is another factor that seems to affect the likelihood of all types of interventions. As noted elsewhere, the United States has a pattern of repeatedly intervening in the same locations multiple times. In part, this may reflect a tendency to withdraw before the objectives have been fully completed or when the seeds of future instability remain. However, it may also reflect a consistency in U.S. interests over time that leads the United States to repeatedly intervene in the same set of countries in which it is most interested. For planners, the relevance of previous interventions can serve as a valuable indicator as places with the highest risk of future U.S. interventions are likely to include those with interventions in the recent past.

Interventions are likely to cluster in space and time.
The fact that interventions appear to cluster geographically and temporally has important implications for Army planners. As noted in the body of the report, clustering appears to be driven by four distinct mechanisms: incompletion, stabilization, buttressing, and conflict diffusion. One large driver of clustering does seem to be repeat interventions into the same country, a likely result of both incompletion of interventions and stabilization operations that follow combat interventions. Planners and policymakers must recognize that when a ground intervention is terminated before the objective of the intervention has been achieved, a follow-on intervention to complete the mission may be required. The importance of incompletion suggests that

the termination of an intervention and the shape of withdrawal must be as carefully planned and executed as the initiation. The importance of the stabilization mechanism is a reminder that oftentimes combat interventions that are intended to be short end up leading to follow-on stability operation interventions or deterrence. In some cases, these follow-on interventions are not planned for in as much detail as the initial intervention. The fact that stabilization can lead to clustering of interventions suggests that planning and preparing for the follow-on intervention may be as important as planning for the initial one. It also warns against the tendency to underestimate the duration and demands of a coming intervention.

Our results also suggest that buttressing and conflict diffusion play a role in driving clustering, but perhaps a smaller one. Both mechanisms suggest that it is not uncommon for one intervention to spawn others nearby as either the intervention or the conflict itself spills over into nearby countries. On the one hand, preventing the spread of a conflict should be a goal of Army planners and leaders. On the other, the finding that spillover and clustering occur suggests that planners and policymakers need to factor in the possibility and even likelihood of clustering in the decision to initiate a new intervention and subsequent decisions about how to resource that intervention.

The duration and demands of U.S. ground interventions are often very different than expected and this can cause resource or mission stress.

Our case study analysis revealed two mismatches that appear common in U.S. ground interventions: the discrepancy between lead time, expected duration, and actual duration and the misalignment between the demands of an intervention and the types of personnel supplied to that intervention. In our discussion of lead time and expected duration, we noted that many interventions have limited lead times and short expected durations, but actual durations that extend well beyond expectations. This mismatch between actual and expected duration has important implications for planning and resources. In general, the planning and resource allocations intended for short interventions are entirely insufficient to support enduring interventions. This can lead to

resource shortfalls, stress on military personnel, and reduced mission readiness. This observation suggests that Army planners must seek to develop better approaches to estimating the duration of a given intervention. Of course, in some cases, it is not the Army that underestimates the duration or demands of an intervention, but civilian planners in Congress or elsewhere. This complicates efforts to ensure that the duration of a given intervention is properly estimated, but perhaps military planners can use evidence presented in this report as one tool for making their case. Developing more accurate estimates of future interventions will, of course, be extremely challenging, but using past interventions in similar locations or with similar mission demands might be one starting point. Developing tools for better estimating the duration of an intervention would be a good area for future research.

The second area of misalignment identified in this report is that between mission demands and personnel deployed. We noted several instances where shortages in the number of personnel or the number of personnel in specific occupations created challenges for mission completion. In the past, personnel deployed on a given intervention have been asked to work extensively outside of their trained occupation to fill in gaps left by personnel shortages. In some cases, these shortages were driven by rapid changes in the objectives of the mission or the conditions on the ground, but they may also have been due to failures in planning and logistics or personnel shortages Army-wide.

Directions for Future Work

This study suggests a number of avenues for future work on the topic of U.S. military interventions. First, there is the question of what determines the "success" of interventions, that is the extent to which they achieve their stated objectives. It may be that characteristics of the intervention are most important (e.g., type of activity or types of personnel deployed) or that contextual factors (e.g., region or characteristics of the target state) matter most or that both contribute in certain ways. This line of analysis could promote a greater understanding of the characteristics of interventions that are most likely to support the

achievement of U.S. objectives and the contexts and environments in which these interventions are most likely to be effective and efficient can inform decisions about where, how, and when the United States should deploy troops.

Second, we have noted in this report that the duration of interventions often deviates significantly from expectations. This raises the question of whether or not it is possible to identify specific factors that shape or determine the duration of an intervention and that could help Army planners predict the likely duration more accurately. Further investigation of this question and efforts to identify such predictors of intervention duration could prove valuable to Army planners if they help to reduce the discrepancy between expected and actual length of future interventions.

Third, the United States often seeks to avoid or delay interventions over fears about the cost of that intervention. However, delaying an intervention may have costs of its own, especially if the situation deteriorates further or spills into surrounding areas, requiring a larger and longer intervention in the future. Furthermore, putting off interventions may also generate indirect costs if the foregone intervention adversely affects U.S. national interests. Understanding these costs may improve policymaker decisionmaking about where and when to intervene.

Finally, while the dataset used for the analysis presented here has a number of advantages and strengths, there are still ways it could be improved. For example, it would be useful to expand its coverage to include naval and Air Force deployments and possibly to collect more detailed information on unit type, at least for more recent interventions where such information can plausibly be collected.

RUGID Codebook and Methodology

Introduction

This dataset was developed as part of the "Past and Future Trends in U.S. Army Interventions," a RAND-Arroyo Center project focused on studying both the historical demand for U.S. ground forces and what past trends might mean for future demands that the Army is likely to face. The dataset includes information on interventions, their size, activities involved, and unit types deployed to support the operation. This codebook describes all the variables included in the dataset as well as a discussion of the data collection methodology.

Defining Interventions

The dataset covers the years 1898 to 2015. The start date was chosen to correspond with the start of the Spanish American War, an event cited by many as marking the emergence of the United States on the international stage. For the purpose of this dataset, we defined an intervention to include any deployment of ground troops from the United States to another sovereign country that included at least 100 "person years." This size threshold could include 100 troops deployed for one year or a larger number of troops deployed for a shorter period of time. We used a threshold because for the purpose of this database, we were most interested in those interventions that would have significant implications for force planning and force structure. While interventions that fall short of this threshold may be important for a number of

reasons, they are unlikely to place the military's force structure under any serious stress. We also did not include military interventions that involved only naval or air forces. While these types of interventions are often used as meaningful foreign policy tools, they often do not include large numbers of ground personnel and so may have limited impact on the demands placed on the military as a whole. In addition, we did not include general forward deployments in the dataset. U.S. troops needed to be engaged in one or more of the activity types we identified, and not simply stationed overseas for convenience, inertia, or to maintain a strategic relationship. So, for example, U.S. troops in West Germany during the Cold War are coded as a deterrent intervention, and included in this dataset. After the Cold War ended, those troops were no longer serving a clear deterrent purpose, though moderate numbers of troops remained in Germany for many years. Because of the lack of clear intervention activity, these troops were not included in this dataset.

After these parameters were established for the intervention dataset, research was conducted to identify cases that met the criteria. The initial sources consulted were Harry Ellsworth's *One Hundred Eighty Landings of United States Marines* and his *Instances of Use of United States Armed Forces Abroad*, a report for the Congressional Research Service. These sources provided lists of U.S. military interventions and some basic descriptive information. From here, we examined official histories published by the U.S. Army Center for Military History and the Marine Corps History Division for information regarding the number of personnel involved in interventions. These sources were supplemented by books, journal articles, news reports, web sites, government documents, and think tank publications. The Defense Manpower Data Center was also used. The official histories were the most useful sources, but they often did not cover less well-known interventions. This necessitated the use of less authoritative sources that contained less accurate and scarcer data. To address this issue, high, low, and average estimates of troop numbers were included in the dataset from multiple sources.

The primary dataset has two iterations, an "intervention dataset" and a "country year" dataset. The observations in the intervention

dataset are individual interventions with a start and end date. Each intervention is coded according to its typical size, primary activities, and type of environment (all defined further below). Also included is information on the countries involved, the region, and a brief description of what the intervention entailed. The observations in the country year dataset are individual country years of U.S. involvement. This dataset has an observation for each country and each year of U.S. involvement. Each observation includes information on the number of U.S. troops involved, primary activities, and the threat environment. With this version of the dataset we are able to capture instances when a single intervention involves the deployment of U.S. troops to many different countries, cases when the primary activities change over the course of the intervention, and instances when an intervention involves a widely varying number of U.S. troops as it endures. The two datasets are linked by an "intervention id" field that is the same for a given intervention across the two datasets and for every relevant country year in the dataset. We have also collected information on the unit types involved in each intervention. The unit type data also has two versions, one that codes unit types for the U.S. Army and one that codes U.S. Marine Corps units involved in these interventions.

While collecting the data we had to make a number of decisions regarding how specific deployments of U.S. ground forces were coded. First, many U.S. ground interventions are long lasting and involve many phases from their start to their end. For example, U.S. involvement in Japan during and after World War II involved a combat phase, followed by stability operations, followed by deterrence. However, each of these interventions had a distinctly different purpose and involved different numbers and even types of troops. We coded U.S. activities in a given country as a single intervention only while the overarching purpose of the intervention remained the same. Once the intervention changed in nature or objective, we coded it as a new intervention. In the above example, then, we would have coded three separate interventions. However, our default was to code the presence of U.S. forces in a given country as one continuous intervention, so we required clear and convincing proof the purpose of the intervention had shifted. In some cases, the distinction between one and several interventions followed a

change in the name of the operation, but this was not always the case. For instance, there were many named deterrent interventions in the Persian Gulf. However, because these had a single purpose and involved a continuous U.S. presence, we coded this as a single intervention.

The treatment of the combat phase of the U.S. interventions into World War I and World War II requires additional discussion. For the purpose of the intervention dataset the treatment of the world wars is fairly straightforward. World War I counts as a single intervention and World War II is treated as two, the Pacific and Atlantic theaters. There are also a number of interventions associated with World War II that are coded separately because they had distinct start and end dates and so can be considered as having involved separate deployment decisions. These include deterrent deployments to Iceland, Greenland, and the Atlantic Bases in the Caribbean. Each of these deployments has a distinct start and end date that predates the U.S. involvement in World War II. Therefore, while each was undoubtedly closely related to the U.S. decision to intervene in World War II, the specific decision to deploy troops to these locations was separate. The country year dataset is slightly more complicated. Both of the world wars involved a large number of troops deployed in a large number of countries with a fluid presence, meaning that troops might be fighting in one country within the European theater and then move to a new country shortly thereafter. As a result, determining the number of troops in any one country at a given point in time during the combat phase would have been extremely difficult and even impossible. Therefore, for the major interventions in World War I and World War II, we did not attempt to distinguish U.S. presence based on country. Instead, we created a European theater "country" for both World War I and World War II and a Pacific Theater "country" for World War II. We then coded the aggregated theater as a "country year." As a final point, for the related interventions in Iceland, Greenland, and the Atlantic bases in the Caribbean we coded individual country years as normal for other interventions.

Intervention Dataset

The intervention dataset includes 98 individual interventions, coded along a number of dimensions including region, duration, primary activities, and environment, along with more detailed information on the location and a description of the intervention. Table A.1 defines each of the variables included in the intervention dataset. Additional detail is provided following the table.

Table A.1
Definition of Variables in the Intervention Dataset

Number	Variable Name	Description
1	intervention_id	Integer used as unique identifier for each intervention
2	intervention_name	Common name for the intervention, often incorporates country location
3	start_date	Text field detailing when intervention began
4	start_year	Integer denoting year intervention began
5	end_date	Text field detailing when intervention ended
6	end_year	Integer denoting year intervention ended
7	duration	Duration in months of the intervention
8	country_1	Name of the country where the intervention occurred
9	country_2	Name of the second country where the intervention occurred, if applicable
10	location_detail	Text field with detailed information on the location of the intervention
11	region	Integer coding the region where the intervention occurs
12	intervention_description	Text field that includes a description of the intervention and the U.S. role in that intervention

Table A.1—Continued

Number	Variable Name	Description
13	armed_service_types	Integer coding the types of U.S. forces involved in the intervention, including Army, Marine, or Both
14	environment	Integer denoting whether the intervention occurred in a permissive or hostile threat environment
15	intervention_size	Integer denoting the size of the intervention
16	activity_1	Integer describing the primary activity in which U.S. forces were engaged during the intervention
17	activity_2	Integer describing the secondary activity in which U.S. forces were engaged during the intervention.
18	activity_3	Integer describing a third activity in which U.S. forces were engaged during the intervention
19	troop_size_description	
20	troop_size_low	Integer that denotes the lower bound estimate for the number of U.S. troops involved in the intervention
21	troop_size_high	Integer that denotes the upper bound estimate for the number of U.S. troops involved in the intervention
22	troop_size_best	Integer that denotes the "best" estimate for the number of U.S. troops involved in the intervention
23	source_notes	Text field that includes notes on important sources
24	intervention_description_long	Text field with longer description of the intervention

The variables in Table A.1 are described here in more detail:

1. intervention_id
    - Unique integer, starting at 1. This identifying number links the intervention and country year tabs of the database

2. intervention_name
   • Text field
3. start_date
   • Text field
4. start_year
   • Year Integer, minimum value 1898, maximum value 2015.
5. end_date
   • Text field
6. end_year
   • Year Integer, minimum value 1900, maximum value 2015 (enter –9 for ongoing/uncompleted intervention as of 2015)
7. duration
   • Integer, provides the length of the intervention in months. Ongoing cases are current as of November 2015. In cases where we only know the year of the intervention and not the specific month in which it began, duration is calculated using January 1 as the start and December 31 as the end date. Partial months are rounded up in most cases (e.g., 4 months and 12 days would be coded as 5 months). However, there are a few exceptions. For example, if an intervention began on June 30 and ended on August 1, it is counted as one month, not two.
8. country_1
   • Text field.
9. country_2
   • Text field.
10. location_detail
    • Text field.
11. region
    • 0 (North America, including the U.S. and Canada)
    • 1 (Central America/Caribbean, including Mexico)
    • 2 (South America)
    • 3 (Europe)
    • 4 (Eurasia)
    • 5 (West Africa)
    • 6 (East and Southern Africa)

- 7 (Mideast and North Africa)
- 8 (South and Central Asia)
- 9 (East and Southeast Asia/Oceania)
12. intervention_description
    - Text field.
13. armed_service_types
    - 1 (Army only)
    - 2 (Marines only)
    - 12 (Army and Marines)
14. environment: This variable captures the threat environment that characterizes the intervention. Deployments into permissive conditions imply different force and readiness requirements, as well as a lower risk of escalation than nonpermissive environments.
    - 0 (Hostile/nonpermissive)
    - 1 (Permissive)

    We coded as nonpermissive any intervention that met one of the following criteria:
    - *Deployment into an Ongoing Conflict:* The United States deployed forces in an ongoing violent conflict, as defined and coded by the Correlates of War and UCDP datasets.
    - *Deployment in a Post-Conflict Environment with Ongoing Instability:* The United States was engaged in a peace operation mandated under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter.
    - *Deployment in the Context of High International Tensions:* The United States was engaged in a Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) with a hostility level of at least "3" with either the country into which U.S. forces were deployed or any of its neighbors
15. intervention_size: This variable codes intervention size. The size of an intervention may vary significantly over the course of single intervention. For the purpose of this dataset, we chose the "typical" size of the intervening force.
    - 1 (Small): Fewer than 500 person-years (roughly one battalion deployed for one year) in each year but more than the 100 person-years. (*E.g., U.S. advisory mission in Colombia*)

- 2 (Medium): More than 500 but fewer than 20,000 person-years (i.e., between roughly one battalion and one division deployed for one year) in any single year. (*E.g., U.S. participation in KFOR*)
- 3 (Large): More than 20,000 person-years (i.e., roughly one division deployed for one year) in any year of the deployment. (*E.g., Vietnam War, OEF-A, OIF, and U.S. participation in IFOR in Bosnia*)

16. activity_1: This variable (and the two other activity variables) denotes the activities conducted during the intervention. The primary activity is considered to be the dominant or most common activity, followed by the secondary, and third activity. This determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject matter experts where necessary. We defined seven possible activity types.

- 1 (Advisory/FID): Interventions involving U.S. military advisors or trainers. The focus of these interventions is typically on preparing host nation personnel to operate on their own.
- 2 (COIN): Interventions involving counterinsurgency activities, which, according to JP 3-24 includes "comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes" (pg. iii).
- 3 (Combat/Conventional Warfare): Interventions involving traditional military operations and fighting, characterized by large formations of organized military forces on both sides.
- 4 (Deterrence): Interventions involving activities intended to dissuade an adversary from taking an action not desired by the United States. This may also include intimidation interventions aimed at the same purpose.
- 5 (HA/DR): Interventions involving humanitarian and relief operations, including responses to natural disasters and conflict.
- 6 (Security): Interventions involving protection of U.S. assets or personnel during periods of threat or unrest.
- 7 (Stability Operations): Interventions involving operations to stabilize or maintain peace in post-conflict situations. This

        may include operations following coups or other situations causing unrest among the civilian population.

17. activity_2: This codes the secondary activity of each intervention, if relevant. Categories are the same as above.
    - See above.
18. activity_3: This codes the third activity involved in each intervention, if relevant. Categories are the same as above.
    - See above.
19. troop_size_description
    - Text field.
20. troop_size_min
    - Numeric value. –9 if number is unknown. This codes the lower bound of the number of troops involved in the intervention.
21. troop_size_max
    - Numeric value. –9 if number is unknown. This codes the upper bound of the number of troops involved in the intervention.
22. troop_size_ave
    - Numeric value. –9 if number is unknown. This codes the lower bound of the number of troops involved in the intervention.
23. source_notes
    - Text field
24. intervention_description_long
    - Text field.

Interventions by Country-Year Dataset

The country year dataset codes interventions by the country and year of U.S. involvement. For interventions that involve several countries there will be separate entries for each country and year of involvement. For each country year, we have included the number of U.S. troops and the primary activity, among other variables. The size of an intervention, the activities, and the threat environment may change over the course a single intervention. The country year dataset can be linked to the intervention dataset through the intervention id variable, which will always be the same for all country years related to a single intervention. The variables in this version of the dataset are defined in Table A.2. Additional detail on each variable is provided after the table.

Table A.2
Definition of Variables in the Intervention Dataset

Number	Variable Name	Description
1	intervention_id	Integer identifying the intervention associated with that country year
2	Country	Text field naming the country where the intervention occurred
3	Year	Year integer identifying the year of the intervention
4	country_code	Correlates of War Country Code
5	armed_service_types	Integer identifying the Armed Services involved in the intervention—Army, Marines, or both
6	troop_size_coding_notes	Text field with details on coding of troop numbers fields
7	troop_size_low	Integer providing a lower bound estimate for the number of U.S. troops involved in that country year of the intervention
8	troop_size_high	Integer providing an upper bound estimate for the number of U.S. troops involved in that country year of the intervention.
9	troop_size_best	Integer providing a "best estimate" for the number of U.S. troops involved in that country year of the intervention
10	activity_1	Integer denoting the primary activity in which U.S. troops were involved during that country year of the intervention
11	activity_2	Integer denoting the secondary activity in which U.S. troops were involved during that country year of the intervention
12	activity_3	Integer denoting a third activity which U.S. troops were involved during that country year of the intervention
13	Environment	Integer denoting whether the intervention occurred in a permissive or hostile threat environment
14	Notes	Additional notes on each case as necessary
15	troop_num_source	Text field providing information on the source for the troop number estimates

The variables in Table A.2 are described here in greater detail:

1. intervention_id
   - Unique integer, starting at 1. Matches the intervention_id included in the interventions dataset
2. country
   - Text field.
3. year
   - Year Integer, minimum value 1898, maximum value 2015.
4. country_code
   - Three letter numeric code, corresponding to the COW system membership list. For the world wars, use 997 for World War I, 998 for World War II–European, and 999 for World War II–Pacific.
5. armed_service_types
   - 1 (Army only)
   - 2 (Marines only)
   - 12 (Army and Marines)
6. troop_size_description
   - Text field, providing best available information on number of troops involved.
7. troop_size_low
   - Low estimate for number of troops involved. If number is known precisely, then the low, medium, and high fields will all contain the same values. –9 if number is unknown.
8. troop_size_high
   - High estimate for number of troops involved. –9 if number is unknown.
9. troop_size_best
   - Best estimate for number of troops involved. If unclear, best guess based on available data. Need not be a midpoint of the high and low options, unless we think that is right. Enter –9 if number is unknown.
10. activity_1: This variable (and the two other activity variables) denotes the activities conducted during the intervention. The primary activity is considered to be the dominant or most common activity, followed by the secondary, and third activity.

This determination was made based on a careful reading of the case and discussion with subject matter experts where necessary. We defined seven possible activity types.
- 1 (Advisory/FID)
- 2 (COIN)
- 3 (Combat/Conventional Warfare)
- 4 (Deterrence/Intimidation)
- 5 (HA/DR)
- 6 (Limited Strike/Security)
- 7 (Peace Operations/Stabilization)

11. activity_2: This codes the secondary activity of each intervention, if relevant. Categories are the same as above.
    - See above.

12. activity_3: This codes the third activity involved in each intervention, if relevant. Categories are the same as above.
    - See above.

13. environment: This variable captures the threat environment that characterizes the intervention. Deployments into permissive conditions imply different force and readiness requirements, as well as a lower risk of escalation than nonpermissive environments.
    - 0 (Hostile/nonpermissive)
    - 1 (Permissive)

14. notes
    - Text field.

15. troop_num_source
    - Text field.

Sources

All sources for this data are included in a separate tab for the spreadsheet.

Unit Type Data

The unit type dataset includes information on the specific kinds of Army and Marine Corps units that participated in the 98 interventions included in the RUGID dataset. We developed two taxonomies of possible unit types in consultation with RAND experts with extensive

experience and background in the area of force planning. We had separate taxonomies for the Army and Marine Corps, presented in detail in Tables A.3 and A.4. The unit type research sought to determine which types of units were present for each intervention so that we could identify general trends in unit type use over time and highlight those units that seem to be particularly stressed by certain types of interventions. However, the analyses presented in this report represent only a small fraction of the analyses that could be conducted with this dataset.

A wide range of sources was consulted in the unit type data collection process. Many of the sources used for the intervention dataset were used for the unit type dataset, so there is a fair degree of overlap. Official U.S. military histories provided much of the initial information about unit types present in particular interventions. These were primarily sourced from the U.S. Army Center for Military History, the Combat Studies Institute Press at Fort Leavenworth, and the United States Marine Corps History Division. The official histories often include orders of battle and lists of units participating in an intervention. This information was supplemented by discussions or mentions of units in the histories' narratives. Unit lineages—providing abbreviated

Table A.3
Army Unit Type Taxonomy

Category	Subcategory
Combat Arms	Armor, Mechanized Infantry, Light Infantry
Fires	Field Artillery
Aviation	Attack, other Rotary
Special Forces	Ranger, Aviation, PSYOP, Civil Affairs
Combat Support	Chemical, Military Police, Cavalry, Maintenance, Signal/Communications
Engineer	Engineer (all types)
Intelligence	Military Intelligence, Reconnaissance
Sustainment	Combat Service Support, Sustainment Brigade, Quartermasters, Transport, Supply, Ordnance, Public Affairs

chronological histories of U.S. military units—are also available online through the U.S. Army Center for Military History and the USMC History Division and proved especially valuable. For the Marine Corps, unit type data was gathered primarily from official histories and unit lineages. These sources tended to be the most authoritative and comprehensive. However, their level of detail regarding unit types is not uniform. In addition, many smaller, less well-known interventions are not covered by official histories.

Archival research was also conducted at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., and College Park, Maryland, and at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Records including orders of battle, organizational histories, and unit lists were prioritized by the research, but other documents—orders, correspondence, memoranda, and reports—were also examined. Some of the documents uncovered during the archival research proved to be the most definitive sources for specific interventions, detailing the exact units present. However, this research had limitations. Many of the archival records have brief online descriptions, preventing a researcher from ascertaining their

Table A.4
Marine Corps Unit Type Taxonomy

Category	Subcategory
Command Element	Communication, Intelligence/Counterintelligence, Civil Affairs, Force Reconnaissance, Expeditionary Force Command and Headquarters
Ground Combat Element	Military Police, Infantry, Artillery, Tank, Assault Amphibian, Combat Engineer, Light Armored and Ground Reconnaissance
Aviation Combat Element	Air Command and Control, Air Support, Logistics, and Communications, Low-Altitude Air Defense, Electronic Warfare, Aerial Refueler Transport, UAV, Attack Aircraft and Fighter Attack Aircraft, Tiltrotor Aircraft, Heavy and Medium Helicopter, Light/ Attack Helicopter, Marine Wing Support
Logistics Combat Element	Headquarters and Service, Force Service Support, Maintenance, Supply, Engineer Support, Medical and Dental, Motor Transport, Landing Support Ammunition

contents — and thus usefulness. The archives visited also do not have records for more recent interventions. Combined with logistic difficulties and the large volume of records, the archival research did not form the bulk of the unit type data collection.

Supplementing these sources were monographs, theses, and student papers published at U.S. military education institutions including the U.S. Army War College, U.S. Naval War College, and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. These sources, though often shorter and less detailed than the official histories, were helpful in researching smaller interventions.

Finally, news articles, academic journals, web pages, books, and think tank reports were also used. For more recent or still ongoing interventions, news articles, and web sites published by the Department of Defense or the services were particularly useful. Other unofficial, nonmilitary sources in this category were less helpful in that they did not provide much detail about unit types (either because they did not address the topic at all or because they only mentioned some units). Nevertheless, unofficial sources were plentiful and were able to fill gaps not covered by official sources.

Unit Type Data Organization

The unit type dataset is divided into two sections, one for the U.S. Army and one for the U.S. Marine Corps. If a unit type is present in an intervention, it is assigned a color coding, described in Table A.5. Empty cells indicate that unit type is not involved in the intervention. The dataset also includes the list of sources used to compile the unit type information.

The variables in Table A.5 are described here in greater detail:

1. "1": a unit type is coded with this color if a distinct unit fitting that type was present during the intervention
2. "2": a unit type is coded with this color if there are units performing its duties, but those units are of a different type.
   - Example: Military Police functions being carried out by an infantry unit.

Table A.5
Unit Type Color Codes

Color	Definition
0	Unit type not present
1	Unit type is present in a distinct formation
2	A unit is present performing the task, but it is of a different type
3	Unit type present, but with some issue or ambiguity
4	Personnel of a particular unit type mentioned, but not as part of a distinct unit
Blue	Marine Corps-only intervention (applied to intervention name column only)
Light Green	Army-only intervention (applied to intervention name column only)

3. "3": this unit type is present, but there is some degree of ambiguity or issue preventing it from being coded Dark Green. This color is also used if there is a rough analogue of a unit type present.
   - Example 1: A logistics/support unit that blurs the line between two categories, such as a Supply and Transport Battalion.
   - Example 2: Marine FAST teams coded as orange under the Military Police category.
4. "4": personnel of a particular unit type are present in the intervention, but not as part of a distinct unit. This most often is encountered with "detachments" or other ad hoc teams.
5. Blue: interventions coded with this color were Marine-Corps-only operations. This applies only to the name column and is not used for the coding of data.
6. Light Green: interventions coded with this color were Army-only operations. This applies only to the name column and is not used for the coding of data.

Sources

All sources for this data are included in a separate tab for the spreadsheet.

Additional Information

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Case Studies

This appendix provides our detailed case studies, the findings of which were summarized in Chapter Five of this report. The cases are organized into three sections: Interventions into Armed Conflict, stability operations, and Deterrent Interventions. Each individual case has a number of subsections. These include: warning signs, objectives, resource decisions and constraints, duration and withdrawal, and lessons for the Army.

Interventions into Armed Conflict

Operation Power Pack, Dominican Republic, 1965

Political instability in the Dominican Republic started in 1961 when longtime dictator and anticommunist U.S. ally Rafael Trujillo was assassinated. The country was ruled by a military government until 1963, when democratic elections were held, bringing Juan Bosch to power. Only several months later, however, Bosch was removed in a military coup and Donald Cabral was installed as the new president. Cabral's unpopularity led several groups to begin plotting his removal, including the Constitutionalists who supported returning Bosch to power. The unrest came to a head in April 1965 when Constitutionalists allied with two Dominican Army battalions to once again challenge the government's control. The leaders of the coup hoped to restore Juan Bosch to power and were able to mobilize thousands of civilians and members of the military to their side. As the situation in the capital city of Santo Domingo deteriorated, U.S. diplomats began working to facilitate the evacuation of 3,500 U.S. citizens living in the city. At

the same time, members of the Johnson administration were fearful of reports that communist elements were working with the Constitutionalists to overthrow and takeover the government. With the memory of the fall of Cuba to communists fresh in their minds, U.S. leaders did not want to lose another nearby government to communism and the Soviet sphere of influence.[1]

What began as an evacuation operation to get U.S. citizens out of the city on April 27, quickly and somewhat unexpectedly became a full-scale U.S. intervention on April 30 when the 3rd Brigade of the 82nd Airborne was sent to Santo Domingo to help stabilize the country. At the height of the intervention almost 23,000 U.S. troops, including Army and Marine Corps personnel were deployed to the Dominican Republic. This force engaged in stability operations, peacekeeping, and other activities, and later facilitated a transition to an international coalition under the Organization of American States (OAS). Despite the fears of President Johnson and other senior U.S. officials, U.S. forces were able to stabilize the situation relatively quickly and began withdrawing in May 1965. However, a smaller contingent of U.S. forces remained as part of the OAS peacekeeping force that helped administer the country until new elections were held in June 1966. The last OAS peacekeepers withdrew from the island in September 1966.

Warning Signs

The intervention into the Dominican Republic occurred with very little lead time and was a surprise for military planners. Despite the lengthy period of instability, military planners in Washington did not anticipate the April 1965 coup or the rapid escalation of violence. The Marine Corps was first on the scene, a product of their ability to float off the coast of the Dominican Republic and await instructions.[2] The 82nd Airborne was placed on alert several days after the Marines

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[1] Lawrence M. Greenberg, "The US Dominican Intervention: Success Story," *Parameters*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 1987, pp. 18–29.

[2] Jeffrey L. Spara, *Peace-Enforcement and the United States Military for the Start of the 21st Century*, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, 1993, p.5.

mounted rescue operations and then deployed shortly thereafter. As in other cases throughout this chapter, the military is often forced to respond to international crises with little time to prepare. This makes flexibility an important aspect of the planning process and increases the value of identifying early warning indicators wherever possible.

There were a number of warning signs, some of which also appear in our statistical model. First, there had been several years of political turmoil in the Dominican Republic prior to U.S. intervention, starting with the assassination of Trujillo in 1961 and extending right up to the U.S. intervention. In addition to the military coup in 1963, terrorist and guerilla activities by leftists contributed to the political chaos.[3] This political instability in and of itself might not have served as a strong warning sign had it not been for two other factors, however. First, the United States and the Dominican Republic had a history of fairly close political and military relations. Since the early 1900s, the United States had taken an active interest in the affairs of its Caribbean and Central American neighbors. This included past interventions in the Dominican Republic, including a long running intervention from 1916 to 1924 intended similarly to stabilize the political situation on the island. While there was certainly a lengthy gap between this intervention and the intervention in the 1960s, the history of past U.S. involvement and political instability in a close neighbor seem to serve as fairly significant early warning signs of the 1965 intervention. Second, the Cold War context and the intense fear of the spread of communism among U.S. officials (especially in areas so geographically close to the United States) should have attracted the attention of policymakers and military planners. Political instability in a nation so near the United States, especially during the Cold War and so closely following the rise of Castro, naturally generated intense anxiety about a "second Cuban revolution."[4] This fear intensified following reports that communists were involved in the protests and violence in the capital and ultimately served as a primary driver for the intervention.

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[3] Ibid., pp. 3–4.

[4] Crandall, 2006.

In addition to the political instability, the recent experience of Cuba falling to communists, and U.S. past intervention in the Dominican Republic, it is also worth noting that this intervention occurred at a time when there were not many other ongoing military interventions, other than long-running deterrent interventions. Vietnam was starting to escalate, but still involved relatively few U.S. troops. This left a lot of available capacity for an intervention into the Dominican Republic, which might have served as another warning sign of the likely U.S. response to nearby political instability.

Objectives

The stated purpose of the U.S. intervention was to protect civilians and ensure the safe evacuation of U.S. citizens from the country. However, the unstated and driving motivation for the intervention was to prevent the government from falling to communist forces, especially given the country's proximity to the United States and the recent fall of Cuba to communist forces.[5] President Johnson even rhetorically asked his own advisers, "We have resisted communism all over the world — Vietnam, Lebanon, Greece. What are we doing under our doorstep?"[6] He would later state, "The last thing I wanted — and the last thing that the American people wanted — was another Cuba on our doorstep."[7] This rationale also extended to the U.S. ambassador to the Dominican Republic who implored his superiors "to prevent another Cuba from arising out of the ashes of this uncontrollable situation."[8] The intervention must therefore be understood as a component of the Cold War struggle in which successive administrations sought to prevent the

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[5] William Blum, *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II*, London: Zed Books, 2003. This account emphasizes that the Johnson administration feared a Communist, pro-Castro regime on the doorstep of the United States. Evacuating American citizens, according to this interpretation, was a secondary interest.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Greenberg, 1987.

[8] U.S. Department of State, "Telegram from the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Director of the National Security Agency (Carter)," in Daniel Lawler and Carolyn Lee, eds., *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXXII, Dominican Republic; Cuba; Haiti; Guyana*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2005.

spread of communism. However, it is worth noting that there is limited evidence that there were communists involved with the Constitutionalists or that there was any real danger of a communist takeover of the government. Some skeptics argue that communism was an excuse used to justify the desire of the Johnson administration to control the political outcome in the Dominican Republic and influence the selection of its next leader.[9]

While the objectives of the mission did not change over the course of the intervention, the activities that the United States was involved in did change greatly.

Resource Decisions and Constraints

As noted above, there were few resource constraints on the intervention in the Dominican Republic. Although the Vietnam War was beginning, it had not yet escalated to involve a large number of troops. Other ongoing operations were primarily long-term deterrence with relatively steady demands. Furthermore, President Johnson articulated his willingness to deploy as many troops as necessary to avoid a communist victory. The operation began with the disembarking of a Marine Expeditionary Unit, which had already been operating in the vicinity. Paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne followed shortly thereafter.[10] By May 1, there were more than 6,000 U.S. military personnel in the Dominican Republic.[11] By May 4, there were 17,000 military personnel.[12] The build-up reached 23,000 personnel within ten days. The accelerated build-up was meant to avert a second Bay of Pigs—initiating an action abroad with too few personnel.[13] It was also intended as a response to changing conditions on the ground and a changing understanding of the requirements of the mission. However, the bulk of the mission was stability operations and peacekeeping. Troops deployed to fight intense

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[9] Theodore Draper, "The Dominican Intervention Reconsidered," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 86, No. 1, March 1971, 1–36.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Greenberg, 1987, p. 44.

[13] Crandall, 2006.

combat "found themselves handing out food, guarding relief distribution points, providing security for US medical and dental units treating the local population, screening pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the U.S.-held sections of Santo Domingo, guarding rebel prisoners, cleaning up garbage and debris, and performing numerous other tasks they had not anticipated."[14] While many troops were forced to work outside of their specialties, there were also a large number of civil affairs troops deployed as part of the operation.[15] This intervention, then, is a good example of how the objectives of an intervention can change rapidly, even when the intervention is short, especially when the initial objectives are not clear. While having units with specialized skills is extremely important to the military's success, so is having units that are trained in a broad range of skills that include nontraditional activities that are often included in stability and peacekeeping operations.

The lack of lead time also placed significant stress on military planners who had to mobilize and deploy not only the 82nd Airborne but also necessary equipment, some of which was not ready for immediate deployment, in only several days.[16] Any unexpected deployment is likely to place strain on logistic capabilities, thus reinforcing the need for mobile forces and responsive and flexible logistic tools to facilitate rapid movement of troops and equipment.

Duration and Withdrawal

The intervention began in April 1965 and ended in September 1966, a relatively short duration compared to many U.S. military interventions, particularly those involving stability operations. Furthermore, U.S. troops started withdrawing as soon as May 1965 and those remaining worked with OAS peacekeepers to ensure a smooth transition. There are several reasons for the brevity of the intervention. First, the United States achieved its goals quickly and with overwhelming force.

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[14] Lawrence A. Yates, *The US Military's Experience in Stability Operations, 1789–2005*, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006, p. 27.

[15] Lawrence A. Yates, *Power Pack: U.S. Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1965–1966*, Leavenworth Papers No. 15, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1988, p. 98.

[16] Yates, 1988.

The rationale behind the deployment of 23,000 troops to a small island with a relatively weak military was to ensure that there was not a repeat of the fall of Cuba, in which an insufficient U.S. response underestimated the threat posed by the communist revolutionaries.[17] The approach worked, and the large U.S. force proved more than capable of putting down the relatively weak constitutionalist forces and stabilizing the situation.

However, there were other factors that contributed to a relatively rapid conclusion. First, the quick souring of domestic and international public opinion likely contributed to the intervention's short duration. Seventy-six percent of Americans supported the Marine evacuation operation. Less than half supported the escalation and the more significant Army force sent several days later.[18] Disillusionment accelerated when the administration failed to provide evidence of a connection between the Constitutionalists and communism.[19] Criticism by political elites such as Robert Kennedy and William Fulbright exacerbated the legitimacy crisis. Robert Kennedy worried that the U.S. intervention would compel genuine Dominican forces for democracy into an association with Communists, subverting the core objective of the intervention.[20] These domestic pressures motivated the Johnson administration to keep the intervention into the Dominican Republic relatively short and to reduce the size after the initial threat passed.

The OAS also enabled and demanded a quick U.S. withdrawal. Soon after the U.S. intervention began, the OAS diplomatically intervened, pushing for a ceasefire and the installment of a peacekeeping force.[21] However, members of the OAS were somewhat angered by the U.S. decision to intervene unilaterally without working through the OAS first. They were anxious to assert the OAS presence and ensure an

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[17] U.S. Department of State, 2005.

[18] Lawrence. M. Greenberg, *United States Army Unilateral and Coalition Operations in the 1965 Dominican Republic Intervention*, Washington, D.C.: Analysis Branch, U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1986, p. 26.

[19] Ibid., pp. 25–26.

[20] Crandall, 2006.

[21] Ibid.

OAS role in the postcoup stabilization. Furthermore, they were fearful of a long-term U.S. presence and its implications. They pushed for a reduction in U.S. presence and an expanded role for the OAS.[22] The Johnson administration welcomed an active role for the OAS; the OAS could share the burden of an increasingly unpopular intervention and allowed the United States to slowly begin withdrawing troops.[23] Thus, the use of an international coalition in this case served the Johnson administration's purposes and allowed President Johnson to smooth things over with OAS partners. While U.S. policymakers are often fearful of relying too much on coalition partners for fear of constraining the ability of the United States to make its own decisions, this case provides an instance where including coalition partners can be beneficial to U.S. objectives and longer term interests.

Lessons for the Army

The Dominican Republic case has a number of lessons for the Army. First, as in many other cases in this chapter, the intervention suggests the importance of the strategic context to U.S. intervention decisions. At least during the Cold War, U.S. decisions were governed largely by concerns about the spread of communism and the Soviet Union. While this threat has passed, it is possible to argue that more current U.S. decisions about deploying troops are guided by fears of global terrorism and attempts to deter and contain China. It is not clear as of yet whether these strategic goals will be as all-encompassing as anti-communism was during the Cold War. However, it is worth keeping these interests and goals in mind when considering where the United States might intervene and where an intervention is less likely. Second, the intervention into the Dominican Republic is one where the lack of clear overarching objectives created challenges for military personnel who were asked to work on a range of unexpected nonmilitary tasks. The unclear objectives also made it difficult to justify the continuing

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[22] For an overview of the OAS role in the Dominican crisis, see Jerome Slater, "The Limits of Legitimization in International Organizations: The Organization of American States and the Dominican Crisis," *International Organization*, Vol. 23, No. 1, Winter 1969, pp. 48–72.

[23] Yates, 1988, p. 91.

intervention to the U.S. public, leading to a loss of public support and an eventual curtailing of the intervention itself. Third, this is a case where public attitudes and elite opinions once again helped shape an ongoing intervention, in this case leading to an early drawdown, transition to coalition presence, and ultimately withdrawal. It was noted in the discussion of the statistical model that war weariness following U.S. casualties can affect the likelihood of a new intervention. In this case, it seems that public attitudes can also contribute to intervention termination. Finally, the intervention is a reminder of the powerful role that historical U.S. partnerships and alliances and past involvement have in decisions about military interventions. Intervention in the Dominican Republic appears to make most sense when viewed not only as an attempt to contain communism, but also as another example of paternalism by U.S. forces of Central American partners. While this type of relationship does not exist everywhere, there are certain areas of the world, Europe and Asia and the Middle East, for instance, where the United States is much more sensitive to instability and much less tolerant of leaders who espouse an anti-U.S. ideology.

Korean War, South Korea, 1950

War came to the Korean Peninsula on June 25, 1950. What might have been a civil war, a conflict between a South and North Korea divided after World War II, became a global conflict when the United States and later China intervened. While the North's invasion caught the White House and the Pentagon by surprise, the Truman administration responded swiftly, sending U.S. forces to Korea under the auspices of the United Nations, and transforming a rout for the South into a major defeat for the North, that is, until China intervened in the late fall of 1950.[24] The ill-fated Task Force Smith comprised the first U.S.

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[24] The official U.S. Army history of the Army's involvement in the Korean War remains an invaluable source. See Roy E. Appleman, *U.S. Army in the Korean War: South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu*, Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1961. The Korean War literature is vast. For a small sample that we find useful, see Glenn D. Paige, *The Korean Decision, June 24–30, 1950*, New York: Free Press, 1968; Harry G. Summers, *Korean War Almanac*, New York: Facts on File, 1990; William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997.

contingent to arrive in South Korea. These four hundred soldiers traveled by plane from Japan on July 1, 1950, approximately one week after the North's surprise attack, made contact with North Korean troops on July 4, and retreated the next day under heavy attack.[25] The other soldiers of the 24th Infantry Division followed shortly thereafter. Several U.S. divisions flowed into Korea over the next couple of months, enabling the U.S. Army to eventually make a now famous stand at the Pusan perimeter. The intervention in Korea included over 250,000 troops in 1951 and over 325,000 at the time of Armistice in 1953.

Warning Signs

Viewed through the prism of the Cold War, America's intervention in the Korean War appears unsurprising. The most obvious warning sign was the belief among U.S. leaders that the North Korean invasion was directly linked to the Soviet Union and as such represented a vital threat to U.S. interests. For instance, one Department of State intelligence report from the invasion's immediate aftermath reads, "The North Korean government is completely under Kremlin control and there is no possibility that the North Koreans acted without prior instruction from Moscow."[26] A historical study of U.S. decisionmaking in the first week after the North's attack similarly finds that Truman believed that repelling the North Korean attack was equivalent to halting the spread of communism.[27] Moreover, the naked aggression of North's attack reminded Truman of the Axis aggression that led to World War II. President Truman was therefore trying to demonstrate that he learned the "lessons of Munich."[28]

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[25] The U.S. Army Center of Military History has prepared a helpful chronology of the early phases of the U.S. Army's deployment to Korea. See U.S. Army Center of Military History, *The Korean War: Phase 1, 27 June–15 September 1950 (U.N. Defensive)*, poster.

[26] U.S. Department of State, "Intelligence Estimate Prepared by the Estimates Group, Office of Intelligence Research, Department of State," in John P. Glennon and S. Everett Gleason, eds., *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950 Korea, Volume VII*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976.

[27] Paige, 1968.

[28] Ibid., p. 115. An important study on the use of historical analogies when making decisions on war and peace can be found in Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich,*

In addition to the Communist threat, there were other warning signs of a potential intervention in Korea. Some were present in our statistical models, while others emerge from a closer reading of this case but may also be generalizable to other interventions. For example, a recent positive experience with war (World War II), the lack of other ongoing interventions, and the huge accumulation of power in America's hands made this intervention, from the perspective of our statistical model, likely. Second, there was a budding rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States. Truman's decision to intervene cannot be considered separately from his fears of Communist expansion and the simmering hostility between the United States and the Soviet Union. There exists a long tradition of research on the ways in which rivalries contribute to the onset of crisis and war.[29] Third, some prominent analysts have argued that the United States has pursued a consistent geostrategic policy for decades: preventing the domination of the Eurasian landmass by a potentially hostile power.[30] In light of this goal, America's intervention in the Korean War appears understandable; U.S. forces had to prevent hostile forces from conquering

Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992.

[29] For a sampling of this literature, see Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, "Enduring Rivalries: Theoretical Constructs and Empirical Patterns," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 2, June 1993, pp. 147–171; Diehl and Goertz, 2000; William R. Thompson, "Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 45, No. 4, December 2001, pp. 557–586; Michael. P. Colaresi, Karen Rasler, and William R. Thompson, *Strategic Rivalries in World Politics: Position, Space and Conflict Escalation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

[30] This particular formulation is borrowed from Aaron Friedberg. Aaron L. Friedberg, "Bucking Beijing," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 91, No. 5, September/October 2012, pp. 48–58. A high-profile group of analysts making a similar argument can be found in the recent National Defense Panel. William J. Perry and John P. Abizaid, *Ensuring a Strong U.S. Defense for the Future: The National Defense Panel Review of the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review*, Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2014. The intellectual lineage of this argument can be traced to Nicholas Spykman, a World War II–era academic, and Halford Mackinder, a British geographer at the turn of the twentieth century. Halford John Mackinder, "The Geographical Pivot of History," *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 4, April 1904, 421–437. Nicholas. J. Spykman, *America's Strategy in World Politics: The United States and the Balance of Power*, Piscataway, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2007.

pieces of East Asia that could become strategically important to the United States in the future. To the extent that this motive underlies U.S. foreign policy, an observer can therefore expect future Army interventions when U.S. leaders perceive foreign leaders as seeking hegemony in Europe or Asia.

At the same time, there were other factors that made an intervention in Korea seem unlikely to planners in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Before June 1950, top U.S. diplomats had actually distanced the United States from South Korea's defense, drawing Korea outside the "defense perimeter."[31] In this context, the Truman administration's forceful intervention was an about-face. The huge U.S. commitment of troops to Korea may appear inevitable in hindsight, but for military and political leaders in 1950, the decision to commit troops to Korea was rather surprising. As a result, planners did not have a lot of lead time during which to plan the intervention or its aftermath. In this case, as well as in others presented in this chapter, the U.S. military found itself committed to combat operations at short notice and without significant prior planning.

Objectives

U.S. objectives shifted rapidly through the course of the Korean War largely in response to the external situation and military reality. U.S. soldiers began the campaign attempting to thwart a stunningly successful North Korean attack. After a successful defense of the Pusan perimeter and the audacious amphibious landing at Inchon, U.S. objectives evolved to be defeat of the North Korean state. This change in war aims resulted from the belief among U.S. officials that Kim Il-Sung, if he remained in power, would continue to pose a threat to South Korea and that aggression ought to be punished to deter future

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[31] The actual term used was "defensive perimeter," an unusual phrasing for the modern reader. The term comes from a January 1950 speech by Dean Acheson at the National Press Club. See Dean Acheson, "Speech on the Far East," *Teaching American History*, January 12, 1950. A close reading does suggest that Acheson did not explicitly rule out the defense of the Korean peninsula, but even the staunchest supporter of President Truman would have to concede that the speech does suggest crystal clear American commitments to Japan and the Philippines but not to South Korea.

such acts.[32] This expansion in war aims eventually collided with the Chinese intervention. Ultimately, the numerically superior onslaught of Chinese forces pushed U.N. troops (a U.N. force has also intervened in 1950) back to the 38th parallel and a stalemate ensued.[33] The major changes in the course of the campaign and its impact on U.S. objectives and priorities can be illustrated by the fact that control of Seoul switched hands four times during the war.[34]

As we have seen repeatedly in more recent U.S. ground interventions in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan, campaign objectives often shift quickly and repeatedly. Planners need to consider the many different types of activities and the potential for long multiphase operations. In the case of Korea, a combat intervention was followed by stability operations and the deterrence. A new conflict in Korea could follow a similar course. For example, future operations could include renewed combat, elimination of weapons of mass destruction, and stabilization and humanitarian operations.[35]

Resource Decisions and Constraints

The intervention in Korea eventually involved nearly 350,000 U.S. military personnel at the height of the Korean War.[36] From where did

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[32] Chien Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, pp. 165–167.

[33] Summers' treatment of the Korean War describes the full arc of events including the large changes in campaign objectives: Summers, 1990. The numerical superiority of Chinese troops is illustrated in John Toland's *In Mortal Combat: 1950–1953*, New York: William Morrow and Company, 1991, pp. 265–275.

[34] George H. Quester, "The Korean War after Fifty Years: Challenges for Peace and Prosperity," *International Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Spring/Summer 2010, pp. 1–9, p. 2.

[35] An understanding of the potentially diverse campaign objectives in a modern Korean War can be gained from two recent analytic efforts. Bruce W. Bennett and Jennifer Lind, "The Collapse of North Korea: Military Missions and Requirements," *International Security*, Vol. 36, No. 2, Fall 2011, pp. 84–119; Timothy M. Bonds, Eric V. Larson, Derek Eaton, and Richard E. Darilek, *Strategy-Policy Mismatch: How the U.S. Army Can Help Close Gaps in Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-541-RC, 2014.

[36] Tim Kane, "Global U.S. Troop Deployment, 1950–2005," *The Heritage Foundation*, May 24, 2006.

U.S. leaders allocate these forces? Did other theaters suffer as a result? Did the demands of other theaters prevent U.S. military leaders from devoting sufficient resources to the Korean War?

U.S. forces flowed into Korea initially from Japan in order to meet the urgent need of stopping the North Korean onslaught. The decision to assign forces from Japan to Korea originated with General MacArthur. One of his first decisions was to dedicate two divisions based in Japan (out of four) to the Korean peninsula.[37] He might have devoted more forces did he not, in his own words, "regard the security of Japan as fundamental and basic policy."[38] There was therefore, at least in the short term, a constraint on U.S. forces in Korea. However, there were some resource-related concerns that factored into decisions about the numbers and types of forces deployed to South Korea. State Department official Charles Bohlen worried about excessively dividing U.S. forces. He fretted that it would be "dangerous for us [the United States] to become committed more deeply in Korea without replacing military units which were called up from other areas."[39] Similarly, General Bradley warned against dispersing U.S. forces and called for maintaining large forces in Europe.[40] Of course, the near tripling of the defense budget in the early 1950s likely eased the otherwise tough decisions military leaders faced about allocating forces.[41] As a result, the Truman administration appears to have avoided drawing off forces from Europe to supplement U.N. forces in Korea. For planners of future military interventions, the implications of the very limited "borrowing" of

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[37] Paul E. Melody, *General Omar Bradley and the Korean War: A Study in Modern Strategic Leader Competence*, Carlisle, Pa.: U.S. Army War College, 1998, pp. 17–19.

[38] Paige, 1968, p. 260.

[39] U.S. Department of State, "Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Frederick E. Nolting, Special Assistant to the Deputy Under Secretary of State (Matthews)," in John P. Glennon and S. Everett Gleason, eds., *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, Korea, Volume VII*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976.

[40] Paige, 1968, p. 166.

[41] The defense budget (in 2010 dollars) grew from $105.4 billion in 1950 to $363.4 billion in 1953. These figures are drawn from a Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments report. See Todd Harrison, *Analysis of the FY 2010 Defense Budget Request*, Washington, D.C: The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, August 12, 2009, p. 36.

forces from other theaters is an important one. While large deterrent forces in Europe, Japan, and Korea could provide some emergency personnel for future interventions, they are unlikely to be the source of large relief personnel should the rest of the "deployable" force come under high levels of stress.

Duration and Withdrawal

U.S. archives on America's decision to intervene in the Korean War reveal a curious fact: there was no discussion in the written record about the expected duration of the intervention or the possibility that military involvement might stretch onward for decades.[42] Of course, a modern observer will know that 65 years later the U.S. military still maintains 28,500 troops on the Korean peninsula.[43] But this potentiality was lost in the exigencies of the moment. The North Korean invasion demanded a response and the U.S. military responded quickly. The opportunity to rid the Korean peninsula of Kim Il-Sung, a dictator who proved himself a danger, enticed the United States into an attack across the 38th parallel. Chinese intervention and the resulting stalemate, in the context of the Cold War, then demanded a long-term U.S. presence, one that is ongoing. There are several reasons why U.S. forces chose to remain in South Korea following the cessation of hostilities. The two most important were the sense that South Korea was still vulnerable to another attack by North Korea, especially if supported by China. The second was the strategic advantage that came from placing U.S. forces in Korea, especially as the Cold War intensified. This is an instance where the fact that U.S. presence in South Korea served many possible U.S. strategic priorities may have contributed to the length of the intervention. The second phase of the U.S. intervention in South Korea, including both stability operations and deterrence, is discussed further in a subsequent section.

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[42] For the early stages of the Korean War, see John. P. Glennon and S. Everett Gleason, eds., *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, Korea, Vol. 7*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976.

[43] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, London, 2015, p. 53.

Lessons for the Army

This case provides several lessons for the Army. First, the military is often asked to intervene in conflicts and crises with very limited lead time for planning and preparation. Responding to these types of situations requires planning processes and frameworks that are flexible and adaptable. Second, the Korean case is one where the deployment was largely driven by overarching strategic priorities and international context, rather than more regional or narrow objectives. In many cases, interventions that seem "surprising" at the time make sense in retrospect when placed in this larger, strategic context. Paying greater attention to these overarching global and strategic priorities in addition to more microlevel drivers of interventions may be valuable to military planners when thinking about the types of places and the types of interventions that the United States may be likely to enter into in the future. Third, the Korean case is the first of many examples where the United States was hesitant to deploy troops engaged in long-term deterrence (Japan) to "hot" conflicts in other areas. While it is often tempting to think of troops engaged in long-term forward presence activities as an available reserve that can be called on when necessary to fulfill other missions, in reality these troops are often seen as more or less "untouchable" and are not moved for fear of compromising the original deterrence or presence mission. This is an important consideration when thinking about available resources for future interventions. Finally, as referenced briefly here and discussed in more detail below, the Korean case is an example of how what is initially conceived of as a short-term combat intervention turns into a longer term mission that includes stability operations and a lasting deterrent presence. Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have similarly proven much longer and more enduring than expected. Planners should recognize that the decision to intervene can often have lasting implications for the demands and commitments placed on U.S. military personnel.

Operation Restore Hope, Somalia, 1992

In 1991, after its authoritarian government had been ousted from power, Somalia was plunged into a civil war that saw internecine clan warfare ravage the country. The effects of the conflict combined with a

drought to produce a severe famine.[44] By the middle of 1992, 300,000 Somalis were dead and millions more were at risk from violence and starvation.[45] Neither nongovernmental humanitarian relief organizations nor the United Nations could fully ameliorate the situation themselves, and they called for further assistance. In response, the United States launched Operation Restore Hope on December 8, 1992, to protect the humanitarian effort. Though not the first U.S. operation in Somalia — a humanitarian airlift, Operation Provide Relief, had begun earlier in the year — Operation Restore Hope would mark the beginning of a renewed commitment to resolving the Somali crisis that would involve 28,000 U.S. and 11,000 allied troops.[46]

Warning Signs

The situation in Somalia had been steadily worsening for nearly two years by late 1992, and the scale of the problem was clear to U.S. policymakers. What — if any — course of action the United States should take in response, however, was less obvious. Bush administration officials and senior military leaders had staunchly opposed an intervention into Somalia. They viewed the situation in Somalia as outside the realm of vital U.S. interests, and that any U.S. military presence there would be a quagmire, bogging down U.S. resources in an intractable ethnic conflict. The United States deemed the crisis a matter for Somalis to resolve themselves through political means, not with the aid of a foreign military intervention. General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, consistently voiced a negative opinion toward limited operations in Somalia and elsewhere, believing that "limited commitments" could snowball into protracted interventions.[47] As a result of this strong stance against a U.S. military intervention, when President George H. W. Bush reversed course in November 1992, the decision came as a surprise to U.S. military leaders.[48]

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[44] United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, pp. 3–4.

[45] Western, 2002, pp. 112–142.

[46] Gary J. Ohls, *Somalia . . . From the Sea*, Newport, R.I.: Naval War College Press, 2009, p. 77.

[47] Western, 2002, p. 121.

[48] Ibid., pp. 135–138.

Many factors have been put forward to explain the eventual shift toward intervention, several of which may serve as useful signposts for future interventions. First, the gradual deterioration of the situation of Somalia and the escalating human toll and increasing number of refugees drew increasing international attention. However, as Somalia deteriorated, it seemed the United States was the only actor capable of addressing the situation. Powell stated, "I was not eager to get us involved in a Somalian civil war, but we were apparently the only nation that could end the suffering."[49]

The humanitarian crisis also triggered a sense of obligation by some senior U.S. policymakers, including President George H. W. Bush. The failure of previous humanitarian relief efforts and the continued suffering of Somalis touched the President, who felt morally compelled to involve the United States in the crisis.[50] The "New World Order" idea espoused by the President may also have factored into his decision. Stabilizing a famine-stricken, anarchic Somalia seemed the sort of mission Bush had in mind when he envisioned the United States' post–Cold War leadership role.[51] After the 1992 election, the political risks of intervention were not as severe, so President Bush may have felt more freedom to act on these considerations.[52] Added to this moral obligation was the pressure from the media. Described as the "CNN effect," the constant stories and images of Somalis succumbing to violence and starvation shocked the American people, who then pressured their government to act.[53] Importantly, a shift in public opinion in favor of an intervention can be viewed as a second key signpost of a coming intervention.

A third warning sign in the case of Somalia was the growing power and clear narrative of pro-intervention foreign policy elites that

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[49] Baumann and Yates, 2015, p. 24.

[50] Baum, 2004, pp. 187–226, p. 210.

[51] Ohls, 2009, p. 197.

[52] Baum, 2004, p. 211.

[53] Valerie J. Lofland, *Somalia: US Intervention and Operation Restore Hope*, Carlisle, Pa.: Air University/Army War College, 1992.

eventually brought President Bush to his decision. Jon Western argues that figures in international organizations, NGOs, and government in favor of intervention were able to provide alternate information that challenged the White House's Somali quagmire narrative. They vociferously emphasized the ability of the United States to alleviate the crisis through military means. By this account, senior leadership in the White House and Pentagon—especially after Bill Clinton's 1992 election victory—saw the inevitability of a humanitarian intervention as pro-interventionists gained clout. With pressure to act in humanitarian crises throughout the world, such as in Bosnia, President Bush chose a seemingly less daunting undertaking in Somalia.[54] The strong emerging narrative of foreign policy elites is an important warning sign that may have given military planners time to begin preparing for an intervention.

While there were some warning signs that could have signaled the increasing likelihood of an intervention in Somalia, the key factors identified in our statistical model for interventions into armed conflict do not do a good job of predicting this intervention. At the time of the intervention, the United States did not have a close relationship with Somalia. During the latter part of the Cold War, Somalia aligned with the United States after leaving the Soviet orbit, receiving large sums of U.S. military and economic aid. This assistance stopped by the 1990s after Siad Barre, the president of Somalia, began crackdowns on the civilian population. By 1992, Somalia did not hold the same importance with U.S. policymakers as it once had.[55] In addition, the poor U.S. economic situation in the early 1990s suggests an intervention would have been unlikely. Some combination of the above factors not represented in the model, outlined above, could have been at play: increasing pressure from the public and from within government to act pushed a President (now unencumbered by political risk) to intervene.

However, even the emergence of warning signs of a coming intervention came relatively suddenly and gave military planners little time to prepare for the intervention. By November 1992, the Bush administration was leaning toward a U.S.-led operation in Somalia.

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[54] Western, 2002, p. 118.

[55] Lofland, 1992, pp. 53–55.

After reviewing different proposals, President Bush decided on November 25 that should the U.N. request it, a U.S. contingent of division strength should be sent to Somalia to aid the humanitarian relief effort. The U.N. accepted the offer on December 3 with a resolution authorizing a U.S.-led coalition. Operation Restore Hope would begin six days later with U.S. forces landing in Somalia as part of the Unified Task Force (UNITAF). Planners, therefore, had only two weeks between the U.S. decision to intervene and the beginning of operations, although close attention to shifting elite opinions and public attitudes over the months before might have given them a bit more time to prepare for a contingency.

The need to develop operations quickly presented a number of difficulties, especially given the complex nature of operations in Somalia. Operation Restore Hope was not only a joint operation (with the Marine Corps initially the largest contingent but with involvement from all services) but also a multinational one: forces from 23 countries fell under UNITAF. CENTCOM needed to determine which countries to bring into the coalition, what their capabilities were, and what support they required.[56] Meanwhile, the scarcity of time severely limited the amount of intelligence planners had to work with.[57] Units received some general knowledge about Somalia prior to deployment, but up-to-date, quality intelligence was in short supply.[58] As with the other cases reviewed in this chapter, the Somali case demonstrates the occasional need for planners to develop operations in time- and resource-limited situations. Official policies and strategies, no matter how long-lived or how central they seem to senior leaders' positions, can shift very quickly and with little warning. However, shifting narratives among elite foreign policy stakeholders, including NGOs, members of Congress, and advisors, as well as surges in public support for an intervention often precede a formal change in stated positions of senior leaders and this may provide some additional warning time in some scenarios.

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[56] Dennis P. Mroczkowski, *Restoring Hope: In Somalia with the Unified Task Force, 1992–1993*, Washington, D.C.: United States Marine Corps History Division, 2005, pp. 19–20.

[57] Baumann and Yates, 2015, p. 25.

[58] Ohls, 2009, pp. 85–86.

Objectives

The United States' objectives in Somalia were often in flux and proved to be a significant issue during the intervention. Operation Restore Hope was centered on support to the humanitarian relief effort. UNITAF would secure the Somali capital of Mogadishu, other major cities, and eight humanitarian relief sectors in the southern part of the country to protect humanitarian relief operations. Once the situation had been sufficiently stabilized, Operation Restore Hope would conclude with a transfer of authority to a follow-on U.N.-led operation. However, determining when this transfer could occur was a point of contention between the United States and the U.N. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, U.N. Secretary General, lobbied the United States to include disarmament of Somali militant groups as an objective and a precursor to the transfer. The United States pushed back, believing this mission would be infeasible.[59] The disarmament issue was far from settled, however; as will be discussed further in the stability operations portion of this case, it would have an impact on further U.S. involvement.

Resource Decisions and Constraints

The United States had other ongoing military commitments as the Somali issue gained importance. Humanitarian operations in Northern Iraq, Haitian refugee relief missions, and post-Hurricane Andrew disaster recovery in the United States were placing a burden on U.S. forces in the early 1990s, as did shrinking defense budgets. Despite these constraints, President Bush did not pursue a small-footprint limited intervention that would have focused on aid delivery and logistical support. Instead, he chose the most resource intensive of the proposals put before him, involving 28,000 U.S. troops.[60] Senior U.S. military and political leaders' initial reluctance to launch operations in Somalia had been overcome, but they remained wary of the intervention's risks; in particular, the memory of U.S. involvement in Lebanon in the 1980s weighed heavily on policymakers' minds. To achieve a more positive outcome in Somalia, a large U.S. force tasked with a clearly defined set

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[59] Mroczkowski, 2005, p. 25.

[60] Ohls, 2009, pp. 74–76.

of objectives—in keeping with the tenets of the Powell Doctrine—was favored.[61]

Duration and Withdrawal

The United States did not believe its involvement in Somalia would be a long-term commitment. Once debates in the White House and Pentagon about the decision to intervene had subsided, a consensus developed that ending the famine would be a simple and straightforward mission.[62] Accordingly, President Bush hoped that Operation Restore Hope could be completed and U.S. forces returned by the time of the inauguration of his successor, Bill Clinton, in January 1993.[63] As Operation Restore Hope was being planned, President Bush pressed the U.N. to prepare to take responsibility for Somalia.[64] The January 1993 target date proved overly optimistic, but the hope for a quick exit from Somalia persisted after the Bush presidency, with the Clinton administration expecting to be in Somalia for a matter of months.[65] However, the intervention did not terminate quickly, but as in the case of Korea and more recently Afghanistan and Iraq, turned into a longer running stability operation that persisted for several years.

Lessons for the Army

Several lessons emerge from the initial intervention in Somalia. First, while large scale U.S. interventions to alleviate humanitarian crises have been relatively rare, the case of Somalia is a reminder that these types of interventions can and do occur. Second, the intervention in Somalia is also a reminder that pressure from elites, advisors, NGOs, and other organizations can trigger reversals in formally stated military or political stances. Military planners may choose to pay attention to the narrative of elites as well as the formal pronouncements of leaders. Similarly, public opinion can be another source of significant

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[61] Lofland, 1992, p. 59.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Clarke and Herbst, 1996, p. 75.

[64] Baum, 2004, p. 209.

[65] Ibid., p. 213.

pressure that cannot be ignored, even if it is not on its own decisive. Third, interventions that are intended to be short and limited often turn into longer term commitments that require more sizable numbers of troops and resources. When planning for intended limited or short-term interventions, planners may wish to also plan for the possibility that the intervention will become longer lasting and more demanding than initially anticipated. This would include planning for future troops rotations, defining possible deployment lengths, and considering long-term equipment and personnel sustainment needs.

Stability Operations Interventions

IFOR, SFO, EUFOR, Bosnia, 1995

The end of the Cold War, while a boon to stability between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, unleashed fractious, nationalist forces, perhaps nowhere more so than in Yugoslavia where a large number of very different groups were previously held together by dictator Josip Tito. The fall of the iron curtain led to demands by Croatia and Bosnia for independence from Yugoslavia. Serbian leaders resisted and civil war ensued. From 1992 to 1995 intense fighting, a humanitarian crisis, and refugee flows characterized the Balkan crisis. A United Nations force deployed to provide relief but did little to stop the killing. U.S. intervention, prompted by increasingly egregious human rights violations, eventually resulted in a brokered peace deal (the Dayton Peace Accords) in late 1995. The U.S. Army then deployed 20,000 troops to serve as the part of the multinational military force that would enforce the Dayton Peace Accords and secure the peace. In strictly military terms, the NATO force was charged with monitoring the warring factions' compliance with the Dayton Accords and maintaining a ceasefire.[66]

The U.S. Army's involvement in Bosnia epitomizes what military scholars in the 1990s termed "military operations other than war." The absence of formal combat operation, the intermingling of U.S. soldiers

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[66] R. Cody Phillips, *Bosnia-Herzegovina: The U.S. Army's Role in Peace Enforcement Operations, 1995–2004*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2005, p. 15.

and local civilians, and the importance of peacekeeping defined this intervention. Though similar in some ways to previous operations in Somalia, the scale and duration of this stability operation were both significantly greater than those in the past. In some ways this conflict foreshadowed the counterinsurgency phases of the future U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Warning Signs

There were a number of early warning signs in the lead up to the U.S. intervention in Bosnia that could have tipped off military planners of the coming intervention. For example, the enormous casualties and refugee flows and the fact that the conflict itself (and its ramifications) occurred in southeastern Europe, the doorstep of many close American allies, appear to be clear warning signs of a likely U.S. involvement. War in Bosnia-Herzegovina led to more than 70,000 deaths. More than two million persons were forced from or fled their homes, becoming either refugees or internally displaced persons.[67] The potential flood of refugees made bordering countries in Central and Western Europe apprehensive and more likely to ask for U.S. assistance. The proximity of U.S. forces stationed in Germany and Italy may also have contributed to higher likelihood of a U.S. intervention in the conflict, given the ease with which personnel could be deployed if needed to nearby countries.

The U.S. intervention in Bosnia also began gradually, escalating over time, a fact that gave military planners sufficient time to anticipate and prepare for a more significant intervention. The Army's December 1995 deployment to Bosnia and Herzegovina was preceded by years of low-level U.S. involvement in the country. Planning for a Balkans deployment began in 1992. In the words of one Army staff officer, "This thing didn't sneak up on us; we saw it coming a long way out."[68] In fact, NATO military commanders examined a variety of contingencies as the conditions evolved from 1992 to 1995.[69] Army training also changed in response to these emerging plans. U.S. Army Europe began training for

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[67] Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1995, p. 1.

[68] Phillips, 2005, p. 17.

[69] Daalder, 2000, p. 46.

stability operations in 1992.[70] There were large-scale training exercises for the forces of U.S. Army Europe in the summer of 1995.[71] As the possibility of intervention became increasingly likely, U.S. Army preparations became increasingly concrete. In August 1995, the 1st Armored Division, in the words of an Army report, "ceased routine operations and focused on planning and preparing for possible deployment of a force package that came to be known as Task Force Eagle."[72] A major exercise, Mountain Eagle, was organized in September and November in preparation for a Balkans peacekeeping mission.[73] Additionally, the United States conducted humanitarian airdrops in the Balkans in 1993 and 1994.[74] In late 1994 President Clinton informed NATO and Congress that the United States was prepared to send 20,000–25,000 troops to the Balkans should U.N. forces require extraction.[75] U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali eventually formally requested that NATO begin planning to help with such an eventuality.[76]

Objectives

The overarching objective of the U.S. Army's mission in Bosnia was to "build a lasting peace."[77] This broad peacekeeping mission could be reduced, however, to several operational goals:

- ensure the warring parties comply with the ceasefire
- ensure the geographic separation of warring parties
- collect heavy weapons and demobilize remaining forces.[78]

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[70] Phillips, 2005, p. 16.

[71] Ibid., p. 17.

[72] Military History Office, Headquarters, U.S. Army Europe, *The U.S. Army in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, October 7, 2003.

[73] Ibid., p. 12.

[74] Ibid.; Phillips, 2005, p. 16.

[75] Daalder, 2000, p. 47.

[76] Ibid., p. 48.

[77] Ibid., p. 178.

[78] Larry Wentz, Richard L. Layton, James J. Landon, Andrew Bair, Michael J. Dziedzic, Pascale Combelles Siegel, Mark R. Jacobson, and Kenneth Allard, *Lessons from Bosnia:*

Of note, the then-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, John Shalikashvili, lobbied for a relatively narrow mission for the U.S. Army in Bosnia, hoping to avoid an amorphous mission that could pose risks to U.S. troops.[79] Despite the chairman's desire, the military did undertake some broader activities. For instance, Task Force Eagle, the U.S. component of the NATO mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, assisted the U.S. Agency for International Development in initiating more than 100 projects.[80] Removing landmines also became an important mission for U.S. forces.[81]

The peacekeeping intervention can also be seen as a creative policy solution. In the year before the operation, U.S. policymakers feared having to forcibly intervene and evacuate U.N. peacekeepers under fire, a policy to which the Clinton administration had publically committed. An active U.S. involvement therefore allowed the United States to intervene on more favorable terms.[82]

Finally, there are also explanations that also identify other motivations and objectives within the U.S. intervention. Perhaps most importantly, the Srebrenica massacre—the killing of over 7,000 Bosnian Muslim noncombatants by Bosnian Serbs—shocked the conscience of U.S. policymakers and created a policy window in which intervention advocates were able to push for a more active U.S. role including an air campaign (Operation Deliberate Force), an international mediation effort, and eventually a deployment of peacekeeping forces.[83] However, while the humanitarian crisis in Bosnia likely factored into the decision to intervene, especially following the U.S. decision not to intervene in Rwanda and the criticism policymakers faced afterward, there is little

the IFOR Experience, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University and Department of Defense Command and Control Research Program, 1998.

[79] Henry F. Carey, "U.S. Domestic Politics and Emerging Humanitarian Intervention Policy: Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo," *World Affairs*, Vol. 164, No. 2, Fall 2001, pp. 72–82.

[80] Philips, 2005, p. 31.

[81] Ibid., p. 34.

[82] Daalder, 2000, p. 46.

[83] Ivo H. Daalder, "Decision to Intervene: How the War in Bosnia Ended," *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol. 75, No. 12, December 1998, pp. 24–31; Daalder, 2000.

evidence that the refugee crisis was explicitly identified as a reason for U.S. involvement in Bosnia.

Resource Decisions and Constraints

The 1990s was a busy time for the United States military and multiple simultaneous deployments forced some careful decisions about resources such as personnel and money. In 1990, hundreds of thousands of military personnel deployed for Desert Storm. There were then a series of peacekeeping missions: Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Additionally, throughout the 1990s the military maintained a no-fly zone over Iraq.

Despite this high Operational Tempo and high demands on U.S. forces, there is little evidence that these activities affected the U.S. decision to intervene in Bosnia. These military operations (including those in Bosnia) did, however, put pressure on the military's procurement budget and stressed the personnel rotation system. Specifically, the need to fund ongoing operations contributed to what some called a "procurement holiday" — funding for procurement was frozen at roughly $45 billion in the mid-1990s despite a target of $60 billion.[84] The constant deployments and the need for a proper rotation base also led to strains on personnel. Especially because the Army did not fully man many units, these deployments created personnel turbulence as soldiers were reassigned to "fill out" deploying units.[85] The increased OPTEMPO led to an increased concern about how repeat deployments would affect retention, although no immediate adverse effects were observed.[86]

However, resource constraints played a more significant role in the decision to reduce and eventually terminate the operation in Bosnia. Specifically, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq placed heavy demands on the U.S. Army. Winding down U.S. operations in Bosnia was a natural way to free up resources.

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[84] Andrew Feickert and Stephen Daggett, *A Historical Perspective on "Hollow Forces,"* Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service R42334, January 31, 2012, p. 13.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid., pp. 13–14.

Duration and Withdrawal

The deployment, which was originally designed to last one year, stretched until 2004.[87] Most importantly, the possibility of civil war reigniting should the United States withdraw meant that NATO forces remained for many years. This nearly eight-year deployment shows how "sticky" a stability operation intervention can be. Once the United States had intervened, it became exceedingly difficult to immediately withdraw forces.

The end of the deployment in Bosnia was motivated, to a large extent, by resource stress and constraints. As mentioned above, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq levied huge demands on the U.S. Army. Secondary operations were therefore curtailed. NATO also left in place a small peacekeeping force in Bosnia, allaying U.S. concerns about a security vacuum.

Lessons for the Army

The intervention in Bosnia provides several insights that may be valuable to Army leaders going forward. First, U.S. operations in Bosnia were long in duration and wide in scope. The experience in Bosnia reinforces the fact that stability operation interventions can be very lengthy, resource intensive, and wide ranging in terms of the demands placed on U.S. forces. U.S. military planners have, historically, underestimated the number of troops and the number of personnel required for stability and peacekeeping operations. This example, as well as experiences more recently in Iraq and Afghanistan, should underscore the danger of such assumptions. Second, the U.S. intervention in Bosnia and the subsequent intervention in Kosovo is a good example of the finding, discussed previously, that interventions may cluster in time and space. In this instance, the conflict in Bosnia spilled into Kosovo and the U.S. intervention in Bosnia also expanded to address the related conflict. It is common for U.S. interventions to expand geographically and to recur in the same location multiple times. Military planners should keep this tendency of military operations to cluster in mind when planning for and initiating new interventions. Finally,

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[87] Military History Office, Headquarters, U.S. Army Europe, 2003, p. 22.

the intervention in Bosnia is a good reminder that resource limitations do constrain the U.S. military's ability to conduct multiple operations at the same time. The intervention in Bosnia forced planners to move troops around and shift rotation schedules, due not only to the stress of operations in Bosnia but also ongoing interventions elsewhere. The duration of the intervention in Bosnia may also have been constrained by resource considerations with the start of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Finally, the intervention in Bosnia is one where planners had plenty of lead time and advance notice. Key warning signs that signaled the coming intervention included the proximity of the crisis to key allies and the large number of refugees. Considering these warning signs in the context of the present day, Syria would certainly be a case where warning signs identified in this case and in our statistical analysis would be present. However, thus far, the United States has not intervened in Syria, possibly due to other countervailing pressures.

UNOSOM II, Somalia, 1993

Operation Restore Hope would end in May 1993 as UNITAF handed responsibility to a U.N.-led coalition. This would begin Operation Continue Hope, in which the United States' role was smaller numerically but just as important as before. The United States' involvement in Somalia during this period would evolve greatly, covering a range of different types of stability operations. Objectives would shift on multiple occasions, with disagreements abounding about what U.S. forces should or should not do. Indeed, by the time the United States had completely withdrawn in 1995, its troops had taken on a range of tasks beyond the initial humanitarian mandate. Resources dedicated to Somalia would also wax and wane over time. The initial force of 28,000 U.S. troops deployed in late 1992 under UNITAF would fall by mid-1993 to 4,000; by the end of 1993, strength would surge up to 17,000 before a gradual decline that would see most U.S. forces withdraw by March 1994.[88] Matching the two—resources and objectives—would prove to be a central challenge of U.S. involvement in Somalia.

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[88]   United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, pp. 13, 61,194.

Warning Signs

The most significant warning sign of the U.S. continuing stability operations in Somalia was U.S. involvement in the armed conflict starting in 1992. As noted throughout the chapter, once the United States intervenes in a conflict, the likelihood of a longer term intervention and involvement in subsequent stability operations becomes significantly more likely. This fact can help military planners anticipate the need for a long-term commitment following an initial intervention, even when the stated intention is for a limited duration involvement. During the transition period between Operation Restore Hope and Operation Continue Hope, it became clear that the U.S. would need to maintain an important role in the U.N. operation. Logistics, intelligence, medical, and Quick Reaction Force (QRF) capabilities were deemed critical for continued U.N. operations—and the U.S. appeared to be the best equipped to provide them.[89]

The significant number of refugees was the second key warning sign of a longer-term U.S. presence and U.S. involvement in stability operations. The civil war had forced many Somalis to leave their homes, with 300,000 fleeing to neighboring states and one million becoming internally displaced. One of the main missions for the U.N. in Operation Continue Hope was the resettlement of these individuals. As discussed previously in the context of the statistical model, the generation of refugees increases the likelihood of the U.S. conducting stability operations.

Objectives

As noted earlier, Operation Restore Hope was primarily aimed toward the creation of a suitably secure environment for the conduct of humanitarian relief operations. Its final objective was a handover to the U.N., but the conditions under which this would occur were the subject of debate. Only a few days after the onset of Restore Hope, U.N. secretary general Boutros Boutros-Ghali pressed the United States to add disarmament as an objective, believing that removing weaponry from the rival Somalia clans needed to be accomplished before the U.N.

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[89] Ibid., p. 71.

could take the lead. The United States scoffed at the prospect of confiscating every weapon in a country awash with armaments of all types. CENTCOM commander general Hoar stated that "Disarmament was excluded from the mission because it was neither realistically achievable nor a prerequisite for the core mission of providing a secure environment for relief operations."[90] The United States opted instead for limited solutions to the arms issue. Agreements were reached with Somali factions to withdraw their heavier weapons to designated cantonment areas, known as Authorized Weapon Storage Sites (AWSS). Weapons control policies varied across the country — with surveillance of storage sites, issuance of permits, and targeted raids and strikes — but they stopped short of outright disarmament during UNITAF's tenure.[91]

As the intervention continued, however, the scope of the operation would grow — "mission creep" became a common refrain with regard to the Somalian intervention.[92] The first manifestations of this phenomenon occurred during Restore Hope, with UNITAF taking on nation-building activities, such as infrastructure projects and construction of schools and hospitals.[93] UNITAF also assisted in the reconstitution of a police force for Somalia, with multiple coalition members providing training and supplies.[94] These initial forays into nation building were viewed as not unduly taxing U.S. resources.[95]

The issue of mission creep would become more salient with the beginning of Operation Continue Hope and United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II)'s mandate in March 1993 (the actual handover from UNITAF to UNOSOM II would occur two months later, in May). UNOSOM II broadened the scope of U.S. and allied activities in Somalia. The nation-building activities on the margins of UNITAF's mission became the centerpiece under UNOSOM II. It

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[90] Baumann and Yates, 2015, p. 36.

[91] Ibid., pp. 63–65.

[92] United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, p. 8.

[93] Ohls, 2009, p. 105.

[94] Mroczkowski, 2005, pp. 58–62.

[95] Ohls, 2009, p. 105.

placed new emphasis on peace enforcement and disarmament and "was also mandated to assist in the reconstruction of economic, social, and political life."[96] UNOSOM II's more assertive role was answered in kind by Somali faction leaders, particularly Mohamed Farah Aidid. In June 1993, a UNOSOM II weapons inspection ended in an ambush that claimed the lives of 24 Pakistani soldiers. In response, the U.N. passed a resolution authorizing military action against the parties responsible: Aidid and his Somalia National Army (SNA) faction.[97] UNOSOM II forces—with the United States playing a major role—began a series of combat operations designed to degrade Aidid's group and its base of operations. Weapons storage locations, Aidid's radio station, and clan leaders were targeted. By August 1993, the focus of the effort was capturing Aidid himself. To support this mission, U.S. Special Operations Forces were dispatched to Somalia. Their raids were successful in capturing some SNA officials, but Aidid himself remained free. On October 3, 1993, another attempt to capture SNA lieutenants evolved into a pitched battle in the streets of Mogadishu after two U.S. helicopters were downed by Somali militia. The raid secured the SNA leaders and inflicted heavy casualties, but at a high cost to the United States, which lost 18 soldiers.[98]

The aftermath of the October 3 battle had a significant impact on UNOSOM II and U.S. operations. On October 7, President Clinton announced that U.S. forces would be withdrawn from Somalia by March 31, 1994. The U.S. military presence would be bolstered with additional units until that date, but these would focus primarily on force protection. While the UNOSOM II goals of supporting an environment for humanitarian relief, disarming the warring factions, and pursuing national reconciliation ostensibly remained in place, they were not as robustly executed as in the past. As a result, UNOSOM II's offensive operations were curtailed. These missions had always had

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[96] "United Nations Operation in Somalia II: UNOSOM II (March 1993–March 1995)," 2003.

[97] Ohls, 2009, p. 135.

[98]   Richard W. Stewart, *The United States Army in Somalia, 1992–1994*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 2002.

a reliance on U.S. assets, and with the United States assuming a more passive role, other U.N. contingents no longer had the means or will to continue offensive operations.[99] Resolution of the Somalia crisis via a political solution was seen as a more viable option. In February 1994, the U.S. withdrawal began, and by the end of March the majority of U.S. forces had left the country.[100]

Around one thousand U.S. advisors remained in Somalia as part of the continuing UNOSOM II mission.[101] By this time, the U.N. mission had abandoned its disarmament and peace enforcement roles and reverted to a peacekeeping force. With the post-U.S. withdrawal situation worsening and with fewer resources to achieve even more modest objectives, the U.N. decided to withdraw by March 1995. This would lead to Operation United Shield, the final act for the United States in Somalia. In early March 1995, a U.S.-led coalition built around a Marine Expeditionary Force provided the necessary protection for the extraction of the remaining U.S. and U.N. elements in Somalia.[102]

The changing objectives of the United States and U.N. mission in Somalia demonstrate an important lesson for planners. What began as a humanitarian relief operation developed into a nation-building exercise, a disarmament mission, an offensive campaign, and eventually a manhunt before ending with protection of a total withdrawal. The first, more obvious takeaway is that the initial assumptions regarding an operation may not last for the duration of the intervention. This can add an extra layer of complexity to the planning process, as planners may not be able to anticipate every way in which an intervention can develop. The "mission creep" phenomenon may dictate new missions and objectives for U.S. forces, and those tasks may require different units and resources than were originally planned for. Obtaining new capabilities in the midst of an intervention could prove challenging, as it did in Somalia. The ambiguous, changing nature of the United

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[99] United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, p. 141.

[100] Baumann and Yates, 2015, p. 193.

[101] Stewart, 2002, p. 25.

[102] Ohls, 2009, pp. 176–177.

States' role in Somalia likely contributed to the clash between resources and objectives, reviewed below.

In addition, it is important to note the effect an international coalition may have on an intervention. When the United States was the lead actor in Somalia during Operation Restore Hope, it was able to resist to some extent pressures to widen the scope of the intervention. However, when UNITAF gave way to UNOSOM II, this changed. U.S. forces never found themselves under direct U.N. command, but they no longer had the exclusive power to set the agenda of the intervention. Therefore, if the U.N. wanted to incorporate new objectives, the United States could find itself involved in new activities, especially if the United States had unique capabilities to accomplish them. Discussions were underway in the Departments of Defense and State about the issue of widening U.N. objectives and smaller U.S. forces, but these remained unresolved before the October battle.[103]

Resource Decisions and Constraints

As U.S. objectives in Somalia changed, so too did the numbers and types forces assigned to accomplish them. U.S. forces were at their largest and most capable in the initial phase of the Somalia intervention, Operation Restore Hope. UNITAF's U.S. contingent numbered 28,000 troops at its height, the majority U.S. Marines. In addition, the contributions of the other members of the international coalition brought UNITAF strength to 39,000.[104] Despite these significant resources, the limitations of U.S. political will led to some resource limitations. Initial plans for Operation Restore Hope called for augmenting its civil affairs contingent with the activation of hundreds of civil affairs reservists who could have aided in some of the collateral nation building tasks that UNITAF assumed. However, these deployments fell through due to the perception that Operation Restore Hope would be limited in scope.[105]

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[103] United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, pp. 106–107.

[104] Ohls, 2009, p. 77.

[105] Clarke and Herbst, 1996, p. 77.

Following the UNOSOM II takeover in May 1993, U.S. troop levels fell considerably. Only four thousand U.S. troops remained after Operation Restore Hope ended. These formed a logistics command and the QRF. When UNOSOM II and the QRF started to undertake offensive operations against Aidid, U.S. commanders requested additional forces. Some were met: in August 1993, Task Force Ranger's 450 special operations personnel and attached helicopters arrived in Somalia to assist in the hunt for Aidid. Other requests were declined: in August and September 1993, commanders requested heavier, better protected units after a series of mine and mortar attacks (one of which resulted in the deaths of four U.S. soldiers). The deployment of armored and mechanized formations, along with additional attack helicopters, was deemed an unnecessary increase in the U.S role in the UNOSOM II operation.[106]

The smaller U.S. role in UNOSOM II resulted in deficits in other capabilities that allied nations could not easily rectify. For example, psychological operations personnel were in short supply following the transition. Under UNITAF, PSYOP personnel were able to counter Aidid's radio propaganda with their own broadcasts and a newspaper, but UNOSOM II lacked such capabilities.[107] UNOSOM II's intelligence support was also less robust than that of UNITAF.[108] In addition, U.S. Air Force AC-130 gunships had been used successfully in June and July against Somali militants, but they were absent for the October raid, having been withdrawn in August for other missions.[109]

Though U.S. forces would never return to their UNITAF levels, the buildup following the October 3 battle greatly increased U.S. capabilities in Somalia. Joint Task Force Somalia was sent to the country, consisting of two armored companies, two mechanized companies, an infantry battalion, and an engineer battalion. Additional SOF, naval assets (including an aircraft carrier), ship-based Marine units, and air

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[106] Ohls, 2009, p. 140.

[107] Ibid., p. 131.

[108] United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, p. 72.

[109] Ohls, 2009, p. 156.

support also arrived in Somalia. This surge in U.S. forces would bring their total strength to 17,000 by the end of October 1993.[110]

The experience in Somalia suggests that planners should recognize the challenge of properly aligning resources and objectives. During Operation Restore Hope, U.S. forces were at the peak of their capabilities and numerical strength, but their objectives were limited only to protection of the humanitarian effort. During Operation Continue Hope, when the U.N. prioritized a more demanding peace enforcement and disarmament mission, the overall coalition was less capable and the U.S. contingent smaller than during Restore Hope. In the last days of the U.S. presence, the situation reverted back: more troops and heavier weapons flowed into the country, but their objectives were limited to force protection.[111] The Somalia case shows that planners may be denied requests for resources, but also that even when approved, new units and capabilities may not be able to be used as hoped for due to changing strategies and political considerations.

Duration and Withdrawal

As noted in the previous section on Somalia, the United States started preparations for the end of the Somalia intervention as soon as it began. Disagreements with the U.N. on the timetable and preconditions for the transition to U.N. control delayed planning somewhat, with U.S. military leaders growing impatient with the U.N. However, in March 1993 the UNOSOM II resolution was adopted, setting a UNITAF withdrawal date in early May.[112] Those U.S. troops deemed important to the continued U.N. effort were scheduled to remain in Somalia until January 1995.[113] The October 1993 battle would upset this deadline. With 18 U.S. soldiers killed, Congress and the U.S. public leveled intense criticism at the Clinton administration and pressured the President to bring U.S. troops home. Americans were particularly outraged by news coverage showing some of the U.S. casualties being dragged

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[110] United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, p. 61.

[111] Clarke and Herbst, 1996, p. 77.

[112] Mroczkowski, 2005, p. 151.

[113] United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, p. 117.

through the streets of Mogadishu.[114] President Clinton resisted the calls for an immediate pullout, but did set a March 31, 1994, deadline for withdrawal.[115] The majority of U.S. troops withdrew before that date, on March 25. Around one thousand U.S. civilian and military advisors remained in the country to assist with the U.N. mission. In March 1995, when UNOSOM II ended, these too were withdrawn with the rest of the U.N. contingent.[116]

Lessons for the Army

The U.S. involvement in Somalia suggests several lessons for the Army. First, the duration of the intervention was significantly longer than expected and hoped for initially. This seems to be the case with a large number of U.S. stability operations interventions. Planners may need to acknowledge that stability operations tend to be long commitments and plan accordingly, even when the political narrative promises a limited and short intervention. Relatedly, the intervention in Somalia was clearly affected by "mission creep" driven in part by the diffuse nature of the intervention's objectives. As noted above, the United States did not intervene to protect a vital interest or to achieve a clear objective. Instead, the intervention was motivated by a more abstract sense of obligation and moral necessity. As a result, it was easy for the objective to change frequently and for the objective of the mission to gradually expand. This placed pressure on U.S. military personnel who were asked to carry out an increasing number of tasks that may not have been included in their original mandate and on the force more generally which had to sustain a longer intervention than initially planned. This suggests the importance of ensuring the ground interventions have clearly defined and finite objectives that remain constant throughout the intervention.

The resource challenges experienced during the intervention in Somalia also provide lessons for military planners. Most notably, this is a clear example of a case where units deployed with specific capabilities

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[114] Baum, 2004, p. 218.

[115] United States Forces, Somalia, 2003, p. 118.

[116] Stewart, 2002, p. 25.

often ended up being involved in other activities. While it is difficult to plan for this cross-use, assigning a large number of forces with diverse capabilities may be more important in situations where objectives are diffuse or varied. Smaller forces may suffice when goals or responsibilities are more limited.

Finally, this is a case where public opinion both encouraged the initial intervention and pushed for the withdrawal. Although domestic political variables were not identified by our statistical models as key drivers of U.S. military interventions, public attitudes may make a difference on the margin and should not be entirely ignored. However, as also illustrated by the intervention in Somalia, even once public pressure begins pushing for a withdrawal, other political or security reasons may necessitate the continuation of the intervention.

Multinational Force I and Multinational Force II, Lebanon, 1982

The Reagan administration decided to deploy the Marines to Lebanon in 1982 on two separate occasions. Both times the decision was in reaction to events on the ground in Lebanon that were seen as appalling. Both decisions to intervene were divisive. The State Department and National Security Council (NSC) led the pro-intervention faction, while the Department of Defense opposed the actions. President Reagan was notoriously bad at managing disagreements among his advisors and as a result his administration's policies sometimes vacillated widely or contained internal contradictions as he made a compromise decision that typically satisfied neither side. These dynamics clearly affected the shape and size of the U.S. interventions in Lebanon.

On June 6, 1982, six Israeli divisions surged into Lebanon as a part of Operation Peace for Galilee. This operation was intended to deal a punishing blow to Palestinian militants — the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) — which de facto ruled over large parts of southern Lebanon. After advancing into southern Lebanon, Israeli forces continued to drive north until they reached the outskirts of Beirut and laid siege to the city. In an effort to forestall an Israeli invasion of Beirut, the United States dispatched eight hundred Marines to join a Multinational Force (MNF) that would oversee the implementation of a ceasefire agreement. The initial decision to send the Marines

to Lebanon in August 1982 was driven by several concerns. Intent on rooting the PLO out of Lebanon, Israeli forces cordoned off Beirut where the PLO leadership was hidden and relentlessly bombed the city. President Reagan was reportedly extremely distressed by the images of bloodshed that he saw on the news and concerned that Israeli's actions would precipitate a broader Syrian-Israeli war.[117] Others, including the Vice President and the Secretary of Defense, were concerned that the United States' relationship with other Arab states would be severely damaged if Israel occupied the city.[118] They along with Chief of Staff James Baker and National Security Advisor William Clark wanted to restrain the Israelis.

Over the objections of another faction led by Secretary of State Alexander Haig who wanted to allow Israel to finish the job, the president dispatched Philip Habib to negotiate an end to the fighting.[119] Over the Fourth of July holiday, Habib proposed that the United States deploy forces to Lebanon as a part of a MNF to guarantee the safety of the PLO fighters as they left the city. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) resisted Habib's plan with Chairman General John Vessey arguing that it would "be very unwise" for the United States "to put its military forces between the Israelis and Arabs." Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, however, disagreed with Vessey and supported the proposal for MNF I because "it was a clear mission" that was achievable.[120] Consequently, on August 20, President Reagan announced that the United States was sending Marines to Lebanon as a part of a Multinational Force for no more than thirty days. Their "purpose will be to assist the Lebanese Armed Forces in carrying out their responsibility

[117] Cannon and Cannon, 2008, p. 142; William B. Quandt, *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967*, rev. ed., Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001, p. 252.

[118] Martin and Walcott, 1988, p. 92; Kemp, 1991, p. 131.

[119] Haig was reportedly enraged that his advice was being ignored. On June 25, President Reagan asked Haig to resign and replaced him with George P. Shultz. Quandt, 2001, pp. 252–253.

[120] Martin and Walcott, 1988, pp. 92–93; Caspar W. Weinberger with Gretchen Roberts, *In the Arena: A Memoir of the 20th Century*, Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2001, p. 311.

for ensuring the departure of PLO leaders, officers, and combatants from Beirut"[121] Despite political disagreements about the need for and desirability of a U.S. invasion, MNF I—the first stability operation that took place from August 25 to September 10, 1982—proceeded smoothly, with the United States realizing its limited objective of ensuring a peaceful evacuation of the PLO from Lebanon.

Because the situation in Lebanon seemed to have stabilized, the United States rapidly withdrew the Marines and launched a new Middle Eastern peace initiative dubbed the Reagan Plan. This proposal was based on a faulty premise, however, as the calm in Lebanon proved to be temporary. On September 14, 1982, the newly elected Lebanese president Bashir Gemayal was killed by a bomb planted by a pro-Syrian faction. In retaliation for the assassination of their leader, Lebanese forces, under the watch of Israeli troops, entered the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps and massacred at least eight hundred Palestinian civilians (and possibly up to 3,500). Shocked by the turn of events, the Reagan administration again deployed the Marines to Beirut to stabilize the situation and shore up the flagging Lebanese government. On September 29, 1982 a 1,200 strong force from 32nd Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) returned to Beirut as a part of a second MNF. Initially, the second deployment of the MNF was less contentious than the first intervention. According to NSC staffer Geoffrey Kemp, "there was almost no debate" as the decision to intervene was an emotional response to the Shabra and Shatila massacres.[122] Many within the administration felt partially responsible for the carnage, which was enabled by the withdrawal of the MNF.[123] Within forty-eight hours, President Reagan agreed to redeploy the Marines to Beirut. Weinberger opposed what he saw as a "nebulous" mission "with no way to tell when it was completed."[124] The Joint Chiefs agreed with Weinberger. Vessey explained, "The guilt feeling affected us all. Still,

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[121] Reagan, 1982.

[122] Kemp, 1991, p. 131; Martin and Walcott, 1988, p. 95.

[123] Cannon and Cannon, 2008, p. 143; Weinberger maintained that there wasn't any connection between the two events. Martin and Walcott, 1988, p. 95.

[124] Weinberger, 2001, p. 312.

we could see it's the wrong place to be."[125] Others in the State Department and the NSC believed that there was an opportunity for a bold peace initiative because recent events had weakened Syria and Israel and there was cross-confessional support for the new Lebanese President Amin Gemayal (the brother of Bashir).[126] This new idea, however, would have required a larger U.S. force that took a more active role in peacekeeping, which was strongly opposed by the Pentagon.[127] In the end, President Reagan opted to contribute U.S. forces to a new MNF but he refused to dramatically expand the size of the force, sending around 1,200 Marines.[128]

Despite the presence of the MNF, the situation in Lebanon continued to deteriorate and Lebanese government forces proved incapable of restoring order. As a result, the Reagan administration made the fateful decision to have U.S. Naval and Marine forces provide combat support to the beleaguered Lebanese forces, leading the other Lebanese factions to view the Americans as belligerents and therefore fair targets. On October 23, 1983, a truck bomb loaded with 12,000 pounds of explosives detonated in the headquarters building of the Marines in Beirut, killing 241 Americans. Facing mounting domestic opposition to a seemingly futile mission, on February 7, 1983, President Reagan announced that the Marines were redeploying from Lebanon to their ships.

Warning Signs

Warning signs that could have helped the Army anticipate the U.S. intervention into Lebanon in 1982 were limited, but there were some signals that could have provided some early indications of a coming intervention. First, both the first and second MNF deployment had humanitarian motivations and appeal. As noted above, prior to MNF I President Reagan was distressed by the violence and bloodshed observed

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[125] Martin and Walcott, 1988, p. 96.

[126] Martin and Walcott, 1988, p. 97; Kemp, 1991, pp. 132–133.

[127] Some in the administration wanted to send as many as several divisions to Lebanon. Kelly, 1996; Kemp, 1991, p. 133.

[128] Cannon and Cannon, 2008, p. 144.

during the Israeli occupation of Lebanon. The concern for the safe and humane evacuation of the PLO was another important motivating factor and the moral appeal of this objective could have provided some indication that an intervention was imminent. The Shabra and Shatila massacres provided an even more compelling moral rationale for intervention that could also have served as a signal of the second MNF intervention, especially given the U.S. involvement in the first MNF. However, it is worth noting that the events that triggered humanitarian concern occurred very proximate in time to the intervention itself, giving the military very little lead time to plan and prepare for the deployment.

Second, the strategic location and the past U.S. involvement in Lebanon, albeit several decades earlier, should also have served as warning signs the potential for a coming intervention. As noted previously, the United States is much more likely to intervene in places where it has already sent troops in the past. In part this reflects the fact that U.S. military interventions are, unsurprisingly, driven by the country's strategic interests and these interests tend to make interventions in certain regions and countries more frequent. The strategic location of Lebanon, its position near Israel, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt, and the history of political instability and violence in the region, all made a U.S. intervention into Lebanon more likely. As noted previously, there was some fear that a failure to intervene would damage U.S. relations with Arab allies in the region. Reagan also feared that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon would trigger a broader Israeli-Syrian border war that could potentially lead to further regional instability. The broader implications of conflict and the strategic importance of the region to the United States provided important warning signs that could have signaled to planners the likelihood of a U.S. intervention in Lebanon.

Finally, at the time of the intervention in 1982, the United States remained the dominant great power, but was facing an increasing challenge as the USSR increased its presence in the Middle East. As the predominant power in the region, U.S. involvement in the MNF was more necessary to its success. U.S. capabilities relative to other powers in the region could have served as warning sign in this case, both in relation to the United States as a sort of regional hegemon and when

considering the Middle East as a region of competition between the United States and the USSR.

However, despite these warning signs, the decisions to send the Marines to Lebanon were in many ways surprising. Lebanon was not a close U.S. ally and the Reagan administration seemed content with a "passive policy" to "keep the lid on" the conflict.[129] Moreover the Lebanese civil war was a regional conflict largely detached from the larger Cold War confrontation, which was the focus of President Reagan. U.S. forces had not been engaged in combat in Lebanon prior to the stability operation nor had the conflict generated a large new flow of refugees. Finally, the scope and length of the intervention were also surprising to U.S. military planners and policymakers. U.S. officials expected that it would be a "quick and relatively clean rout" instead of a deep incursion into Lebanon that provoked serious fighting with Syria.[130]

Objectives

The objectives of the U.S. forces in Lebanon changed over time. MNF I entered Lebanon with a fairly clear mandate and a set of modest goals that were to be accomplished in thirty days or less, consisting of assisting the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) to ensure the safe evacuation of the PLO, providing security to "persons in the area" (civilians in Beirut), and to "further the restoration of the sovereignty and authority of the Government of Lebanon over the Beirut area."[131]

The goals of MNF II's mission were never particularly clear. In a letter to the Speaker of the House dated September 29, 1982, President Reagan described the MNF II mission as providing "an interposition force at agreed locations . . . to assist the Lebanese Armed Forces." Initially, the U.S. forces were proscribed from engaging in combat, except for the right of self-defense. Their aim was to "facilitate the restoration of Lebanese government sovereignty and authority … to assure the

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[129] William B. Quandt, "Reagan's Lebanon Policy: Trial and Error," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 38, No. 2, Spring 1984, pp. 237–254.

[130] Ibid., p. 239.

[131] Kelly, 1996.

safety of persons in the area and bring to an end the violence which has tragically recurred."[132]

At others times, Reagan stated that the mission was to enable "the Lebanese Government to resume full sovereignty over its capital, which required foreign forces (i.e., Israel and Syria) to withdraw from Beirut."[133] Reagan explained that the MNF was "not to act as a police force, but to make it possible for the lawful authorities of Lebanon to do so themselves."[134] Weinberger claimed that "the MNF is not a force to maintain peace, it is a deterrent force."[135] In a September 23, 1983, order the JCS identified the Marines' mission as "presence."[136] In general there was a hope that the Marines could restore order in Lebanon, but as Weinberger critically noted "this MNF would not have any mission that could be defined" and it was unclear how a limited military force could stabilize Lebanon.[137]

Over time different goals were emphasized. As the MNF II operation continued, the United States increasingly prioritized improving the capacity of the LAF. At one point they hoped to bring three LAF brigades up to full strength. But as the Lebanese Armed Forces continued to disappoint, U.S. forces began to act directly in support of them.[138] In September 1983, Reagan authorized the Marines to engage in "aggressive self-defense" and deployed the battleship *New Jersey* to the area.[139] By mid-September, President Reagan had ordered U.S. destroyers and frigates from the 6th fleet to fire into parts of Lebanon to

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[132] Ronald Reagan, "Letter to the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate Reporting on United States Participation in the Multinational Force in Lebanon," *The American Presidency Project*, September 29, 1982.

[133] Kelly, 1996.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Martin and Walcott, 1988, p. 9.

[137] Kelly, 1996.

[138] Kemp, 1991, p. 138; Martin and Walcott, 1998, p. 103.

[139] U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, *The Reagan Administration and Lebanon, 1981–1984.*

support LAF.[140] Reagan reasoned that the naval fire "can be explained as protection of our Marines hoping it might signal the Syrians to pull back."[141] In his September 19 diary entry, President Reagan described how "our Navy guns turned loose in support of the Lebanese Army" but insisted that "this still comes under the head of defense."[142] The President may have believed this, but other parties in Lebanon saw the United States as a combatant and an ally of the Christian government. The evolving goals posed challenges for the Marines because they were asked to take an increasingly assertive role—engaging in combat—when they were a light force limited in size. They were supported by naval fires, but they didn't have the armor or heavy weapons that might have been useful. They also lacked the numbers to effectively police areas that were vacated by the Israelis.

Resource Decisions and (Political) Constraints

The United States intervention in Lebanon was severely constrained but not by resource shortfalls. There were few other major interventions ongoing at the time of the intervention (with an important possible exception discussed below) in Lebanon and neither MNF I or MNF II was that long or required that many troops. Instead the conception and execution of the intervention was shaped by bureaucratic battles and political constraints. In particular, disagreements between the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the National Security Council dictated the particular profile and types of forces involved in both interventions. The JCS selected Marines for the MNF I mission because they were expeditionary forces that were not well suited to indefinitely hold onto territory. In other words, the JCS tried to ensure that the mission would be as short as possible by choosing forces that had limited staying power. However, there were others in the administration pushing for a larger intervention and more active peacekeeping interventions.[143]

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[140] Benis M. Frank, *U.S. Marines in Lebanon, 1982–1984*, Washington, D.C.: History and Museums Division Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1987, pp. 149–153.

[141] Kelly, 1996.

[142] Ibid.

[143] Martin and Walcott, 1988, p. 94.

The U.S. contribution to MNF II was also limited by design. This time it was the President who decided against sending 63,000 soldiers as some of his advisors wanted, and opted instead to deploy the lightly armed 24th MAU, which at its peak included only 1,800 Marines equipped with only five tanks and six howitzers.[144] Anticipating congressional reluctance to deploy such a large force, Secretary of State George Shultz also supported a more limited military force supplemented by vigorous U.S. diplomacy.[145] The only reinforcements requested, which were approved, were the deployment of additional naval forces to the region in the fall of 1983 to provide offshore fire support. A key insight that emerges from the effect of political constraints on the intervention into the Lebanese Civil War is that sometimes political leaders ask forces to do something that they are ill suited for or fail to provide them with the fire or protection or numbers that would have been needed to make a big difference in the ongoing conflict. Basically the forces that were deployed in this case (1,800 Marines) were inadequate given the mission creep. They were a good presence force, but didn't have the capabilities to seriously intervene and then to protect themselves once they got involved in combat.

In addition to the size of the intervention, the Marines were also constrained in what actions they were allowed to take. George Shultz blamed Weinberger for tying the hands of the Marines. He argued that "the Pentagon restricted our Marines to a passive, tentative, and dangerously inward looking role in Beirut."[146]

Over time congressional support for the mission flagged and it was unclear whether they would have approved another extension of the mandate for MNF II. In August 1983 Congress was upset about the deaths of two Marines but eventually agreed to an 18-month extension of the intervention.[147]

However, while resource constraints did not seem to limit the intervention for most of the deployment to Lebanon, at one specific

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[144] Cannon and Cannon, 2008, p. 144.

[145] Wills, 2003, p. 52.

[146] Kelly, 1996.

[147] Ibid.

point in 1983 the Reagan administration *may* have been limited by other operations occurring simultaneously. The invasion of Grenada began two days after the attack on the Marines in Beirut. This action may have limited the ability of the United States to retaliate against the terrorists. Or given the poor performance of the forces in Grenada, it could have negatively impacted leaders' belief that the United States could successfully have done so.[148]

Duration and Withdrawal

Both U.S. interventions in Lebanon ended precipitously. Weinberger unilaterally made the decision to have MNF I forces withdraw only seventeen days after they had landed. As soon as the last PLO fighter had left, the Secretary of Defense ordered the Marines back onto their ships, even though some within the administration wanted them to remain. According to Weinberger, "I wanted to get them out because the mission was over, and General Vessey certainly did, too."[149] However, some within the Reagan administration believed that Weinberger's actions enabled the attacks on the Palestinian refugee camps. Shultz reportedly admitted, "the brutal fact is, we are partially responsible."[150] Deputy national security advisor Robert C. McFarlane went even farther and argued that Weinberger's actions were "criminally irresponsible."[151]

The second MNF lasted much longer than the first one. It was only when the costs of the intervention became intolerable — particularly in an election year — that the United States finally withdrew the Marines. Congressional pressure on the administration grew over time as the Marines were increasingly drawn into combat and frequently targeted by different Lebanese factions, resulting in a growing number of casualties. However, the suicide bomb attack on the Marine Corps barracks on October 23, which killed 241 Americans and wounded 70, brought the issue of ending the mission to a head. Initially, President Reagan argued that the perpetrators of the attack "Must be dealt justice," and

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[148] Martin and Walcott, 1988, p. 134.

[149] Ibid., p. 94.

[150] Kelly, 1996.

[151] Ibid.

that the Marines would not leave. But the United States did not launch any retaliatory strikes. The President appeared to be genuinely conflicted about the mission, wanting to stay the course. But others within the administration were not so sanguine about the prospects of the MNF. For instance, by January Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Armitage stated that the Pentagon was "desperate to get out."[152] Similarly, many of Reagan's political advisors wanted him to end the mission as soon as possible. They feared that the Lebanon intervention could lead to his downfall, especially in an election year.[153] By January, there was bipartisan consensus in Congress that the Marines should leave Lebanon.[154] Both public and elite opinion also influenced the rapid withdrawal in this case, as in other cases discussed here. Some members of Congress were threatening to "assert congressional authority" over the mission and fifty-seven percent of the U.S. public wanted the mission to end.[155] Both were factors in the decision by policymakers and senior defense leaders to leave Lebanon. Finally realizing that the prospects of success were dim, on February 7 Reagan announced that the Marines would redeploy from Lebanon to their ships. The last Marines left Lebanon on February 26, 1984.

Lessons for the Army

The intervention into Lebanon in 1982 holds several lessons for the Army. First, the intervention is another example of the dangers caused by diffuse objectives and mission creep. The first MNF was more successful in achieving its objectives because there was a clear, limited mission that could be accomplished in a reasonable timeframe. However, the second MNF lacked clear objectives, especially once U.S. forces began providing combat support to Lebanese troops. As in other instances, diffuse and expanding objectives placed a significant burden on military personnel on the ground as well as planners trying to ensure that the troops on the grounds had the skills and equipment

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[152] Martin and Walcott, 1988, p. 147.

[153] Wills, 2003, p. 77.

[154] Ibid., p. 78.

[155] Wills, 2003, pp. 78–79.

needed to complete the intervention. The force that was deployed to Lebanon the second time was a light—largely infantry force—without much organic firepower or protection. This force might have been sufficient as a peacekeeping force if there had actually been peace. But it did not have the capabilities to successfully enforce the peace or prevail in combat. Second, Lebanon is also another example of an intervention that was intended to be short and ended up becoming longer and more involved than expected. While MNF I completed its mission in less time than was anticipated, its premature withdrawal might have contributed to the need for MNF II. The JCS expected MNF II to last for 60 days, which was obviously an incorrect estimate. This frequency with which interventions become protracted should give military planners pause. Planners may need to assume that initial expectations about the duration of the operation, the number of forces, and the resources required may be underestimated.

Third, the intervention is an example of how large numbers of U.S. casualties and shifting public opinion can constrain the decisions of policymakers and drive the termination of an intervention, particularly one in which U.S. vital interests were not at stake. Our statistical models did observe evidence of war weariness when the United States intervenes in ongoing conflicts and this appears to be a case where public attitudes following a tragic attack on Americans may have influenced intervention decisions. Finally, as noted previously this was in intervention constrained not by limited resources but by political disagreements over the size, shape, and purpose of the intervention. While much of the discussion in this report focuses on Army decisionmaking and resources, it is important to also keep in mind the powerful role played by political actors and the way the U.S. domestic political context can affect policymaker decisions. Although our statistical models did not find evidence that domestic politics consistently affects intervention decisions, this case suggests that domestic politics does matter in some cases and is a factor that needs to be considered. While the Army can do little to change these dynamics, understanding how ongoing political battles and the overarching political context may affect choices about where and when to intervene, senior Army leaders and military planners may be better able to anticipate coming deployments.

Post–Korean War Stability Operations, Korea, 1953

As discussed previously in this chapter, a bloody three-year war on the Korean peninsula evolved into a stability operation following the armistice and then turned into a tense decades-long deterrence mission for the U.S. Army and the other military services. This case, which includes both elements of a stability operation (in its early years) and a deterrence mission, illustrates the potential for combat operations to transform into long-term forward deployments.[156] In fact, more than fifty thousand U.S. military personnel remained in South Korea from 1953 until 1970. U.S. force levels on the Korean peninsula then slowly declined. In 2016, approximately 28,500 U.S. military personnel were still garrisoned in South Korea. See Figure B.1 for a graphic of force levels in South Korea.

Warning Signs

The warning signs for a continued U.S. presence in South Korea were apparent even as the conflict wound down toward the armistice. Fundamentally, U.S. leaders viewed the armistice as a flimsy guarantee of peace and the threat posed by North Korea as severe and prolonged. They felt that were U.S. forces to leave, South Korea would once again be vulnerable to an attack by North Korea. Troops, not a document, were the surest route to stability in the views of many. For instance, upon the signing of the armistice, General Maxwell Taylor, commander of the Eighth Army in Korea, remarked, "There is no strong feeling that our problems here are over, nor that the armistice is an occasion for unrestrained rejoicing."[157] The Commander of the United Nations Command concurred. He declared, "I must tell you as emphatically as I can, that this does not mean immediate or even early withdrawal from Korea. The conflict will not be over until the governments concerned have reached a firm political settlement."[158] Similarly, President

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[156] Although we cover this case in the stability operation section, it also includes elements of deterrence and would fit equally well in the section on deterrence.

[157] Lindesay Parrott, "Truce Is Signed, Ending the Fighting in Korea; P.O.W. Exchange Near; Rhee Gets U.S. Pledge; Eisenhower Bids Free World Stay Vigilant," *New York Times*, July 27, 1951.

[158] Ibid.

Eisenhower in a post-armistice address warned, "We may not relax our guard nor cease our quest. . . . We and our U.N. allies must be vigilant against the possibility of untoward developments."[159] The threat of a breakdown of the armistice and the renewal of hostilities therefore nearly guaranteed a continued U.S. presence.

In addition to the existing threat, other factors forewarned of an extended U.S. deployment into South Korea. First, by the end of the Korean War, the United States and South Korea had developed a close relationship and a shared perception of security that included the territorial integrity of South Korea. The preamble from the mutual defense treaty signed by South Korea and the United States demonstrates these developments. The treaty describes how an "armed attack in the Pacific area on either of the parties . . . would be dangerous to its own peace and safety."[160] Second, the United States had just participated in combat operations on behalf of South Korea. As noted previously, participation in a previous combat intervention is a strong predictor of the U.S. decision to engage in stability operations. Third, the military imbalance between the threat (North Korea and China) and the host state (South Korea) forces meant that only an U.S. deployment could stabilize the military balance. U.S. interests in preventing the spread of communism and protecting democracy in East Asia also fueled the U.S. commitment to South Korea. However, while there were clear warning signs that the United States was likely to remain in South Korea after the end of formal hostilities, there were not clear indicators that could have predicted the duration of the deployment, which has continued even today.

Objectives

The main objectives of the U.S. deployment in South Korea after 1953 were twofold: first, to protect South Korea from another invasion and second, to help rebuild South Korea following the conflict. To accomplish these objectives, the U.S. military was involved in a

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[159] Dwight D. Eisenhower, "The President's Message to the Nation," *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 29, Publication 5143, August 3, 1953.

[160] Yale Law School, Lillian Goldman Law Library, 2008.

number of different activities while in Korea, including not only deterrence focused operations but also advising, training, and assisting the South Korean military. This advise-and-assist mission was an important part of U.S. stability operations in South Korea after the war and also contributed to the deterrence mission by building the capabilities that the South Korean military would need to protect itself. In addition, the United States provided equipment to the South Korean military. Between 1950 and 1968, the United States supplied South Korea $2.5 billion in military aid, transferring F-86 Sabres, frigates, oilers, minesweepers, and other military equipment.[161] As late as 1965, the United States still funded 62 percent of the South Korean military budget.[162] The Korean Military Advisors Group (KMAG), which predated the Korean War, also continued into the fifties and assisted South Korean forces in developing their organizational, training, and maintenance skills.[163]

Resource Decisions and Constraints

The "New Look" strategy promulgated by President Dwight D. Eisenhower following a military review in 1953 had clear implications for U.S. military forces deployed abroad including the U.S. forces stationed on the Korean peninsula. These forces, especially ground forces, were to be reduced and replaced instead with an increased reliance on nuclear weapons for extended deterrence. In line with this strategic reorientation, U.S. forces in Korea were reduced significantly in the mid-1950s. In fact, "the first dramatic application of the New Look was the decision to reduce United States ground forces in Korea. On December 26 [1953], the President announced that these forces would be 'progressively reduced' and that as an initial step, two divisions would be

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[161] Norman D. Levin and Richard L. Sneider, *Korea in Postwar U.S. Security Policy*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, P-6775, 1982, pp. 14–15. The figure of $2.5 billion is likely denominated in "then-year" dollars. The source does not specify. Assuming then-year dollars, one can therefore assume that the contribution, if inflation-adjusted, would appear yet more substantial.

[162] Ibid., p. 17.

[163] Ibid., p. 13.

withdrawn."[164] This decision reduced the deployment to South Korea by 32,000 personnel.[165] Four Army divisions also returned home in 1954.[166] Figure B.1 displays these reductions. These reductions were the result of a New Look policy borne of a desire to compete over the "long haul" with the Soviet Union and a search for "strategic solvency."[167] In essence, President Eisenhower perceived troop-heavy deployments as too expensive, though, given the end of combat operations in the Korean War, troop levels would have decreased anyway.[168] These troop decreases occurred despite the lack of competing operational demands.

In considering the number of U.S. troops deployed to Korea, we also looked into how U.S. combat and COIN operations in the Vietnam and Southeast Asia affected decisions about resourcing the deterrent mission in Korea. We found that in general there was little discussion of drawing down the U.S. presence in Korea to support operations in Vietnam, at least until 1968, the height of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.[169] However, in the late 1960s and early 1970s President Richard Nixon did reduce troop levels in Korea.[170] This reduction was only indirectly a result of the Vietnam War. The fighting in Southeast Asia soured the views of U.S. elites toward an active foreign

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[164] Warner R. Schilling, Paul Y. Hammond, and Glenn H. Snyder, *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1962, p. 456.

[165] Ibid.

[166] Richard Cavendish, "Troop Withdrawals from Korea," *History Today*, August 8, 2004.

[167] John. L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Reappraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 125–196.

[168] Jae-Bong Lee, "U.S. Deployment of Nuclear Weapons in 1950s South Korea & North Korea's Nuclear Development: Toward Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," *The Asia-Pacific Journal Japan Focus*, Vol. 7, No. 8, February 2009, pp. 1–17. This article emphasizes Eisenhower's fiscal concerns as a source of the U.S. policy to increasingly rely on nuclear weapons in the 1950s.

[169] We also investigated whether the demands of the European theater, another deterrence mission, drained away forces from Korea. We found no evidence. See William P. Mako, *U.S. Ground Forces and the Defense of Central Europe (Studies in Defense Policy)*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1983, pp. 3–30.

[170] Levin and Sneider, 1982, p. 25.

Figure B.1
U.S. Troops Deployed in South Korea from 1950 Onward
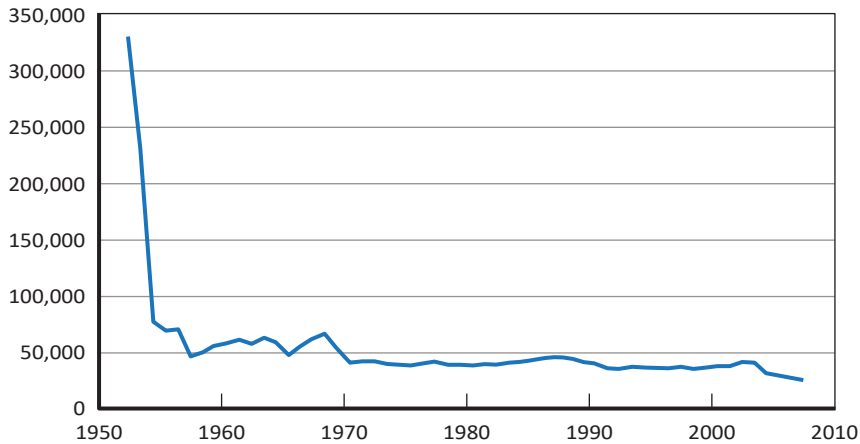
SOURCE: Defense Manpower Data Center data collected by RAND.
RAND *RR1831A-B.1*

policy in East Asia. A reduction in U.S. troops in Korea was in part a result of this change in public opinion.[171]

Duration and Withdrawal

As the threat of invasion to South Korea from North Korean gradually waned, partially the result of economic modernization in the South Korea and the development of a proficient military, U.S. forces decreased in number. Nevertheless, today 28,500 U.S. military personnel remain in South Korea, a level set in an agreement between George W. Bush and then Republic of Korea (ROK) president Lee Myung-bak in 2008.[172] There are several reasons for the long duration of this intervention and the fact that U.S. forces remain even today.

First, when the threat of an overwhelming North Korean cross-border invasion receded, U.S. forces remained, serving as what could

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[171] Ibid., p. 23.

[172] International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2015; The Chosunilbo, "Lee, Bush Agree to Forge '21st Century Alliance,'" April 21, 2008, web page.

arguably be called a "tripwire" force.[173] Any North Korean aggression would inevitably risk shedding U.S. blood, virtually guaranteeing an U.S. response and thereby deterring North Korea from the outset. More recently, North Korea's development of nuclear weapons adds a new reason for the U.S. presence: securing weapons in the event of a North Korean collapse. The U.S. Army would likely play a major role in seizing and policing nuclear, biological, and chemical sites in a collapse scenario.[174] America's military presence in South Korea also generally aids in the projection of force in East Asia. Because of South Korean subsidies, continued U.S. presence carries a price tag much less than would otherwise be the case.[175] Finally, the U.S. presence has also likely dampened the South Korean desire for nuclear weapons, which means that U.S. soldiers have indirectly served an important nonproliferation goal in South Korea.[176] The many missions over the span of America's presence in South Korea reveal that "deterrence" encompasses a wide range of objectives and activities. Future deterrence missions could be similarly broad, requiring a long-term presence designed for a range of objectives.

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[173] There was a series of analytically rigorous articles in the 1990s about the ability of U.S. and South Korean forces to handily repulse a North Korean attack. It must be said, however, that North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons transforms this debate. Nick Beldecos and Eric Heginbotham, "The Conventional Military Balance in Korea," *Breakthroughs*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1995, pp. 1–8; Michael O'Hanlon, "Stopping a North Korean Invasion: Why Defending South Korea Is Easier Than the Pentagon Thinks," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 4, Spring 1998, pp. 135–170.

[174] Bruce W. Bennett and Jennifer Lind, "The Collapse of North Korea: Military Missions and Requirements," *International Security*, Vol. 36, No. 2, Fall 2011, pp. 84–119; Bonds et al., 2014.

[175] Michael J. Lostumbo, Michael J. McNerney, Eric Peltz, Derek Eaton, David R. Frelinger, Victoria A. Greenfield, John Halliday, Patrick Mills, Bruce R. Nardulli, Stacie L. Pettyjohn, Jerry M. Sollinger, and Stephen M. Worman, *Overseas Basing of U.S. Military Forces: An Assessment of Relative Costs and Strategic Benefits*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-201-OSD, 2013, pp. 149–153.

[176] Nuno P. Monteiro and Alexandre Debs, "The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation," *International Security*, Vol. 39, No. 2, Fall 2014, pp. 7–51; Philip C. Bleek and Eric B. Lorber, "Security Guarantees and Allied Nuclear Proliferation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 58, No. 3, April 2014, pp. 429–454.

Interestingly, part of the current rationale for maintaining U.S. forces in South Korea arises not from the threat posed by North Korea, but rather the threat posed by China. While the risk of a Chinese invasion of South Korea is relatively low, U.S. forces in South Korea give the United States a sizeable forward presence in the region and serve a deterrent purpose by supporting U.S. power projection and responsiveness to the emergence of new aggression and new threats in the region. As such, it seems unlikely that the United States will withdraw or reduce forces in Korea in the near future. In fact, U.S. forces in Korea are seen as more or less "untouchable" even in the face of significant OPTEMPO demands, such as those posed by Iraq and Afghanistan in the 2000s.

Lessons for the Army

America's post-armistice experience on the Korean peninsula illustrates that combat operations can easily become a long-term military deployment. The fragility of the armistice, the close relationship between South Korea and the United States, America's participation in combat operations, and the relative military weakness of South Korea combined to generate first a stability operation and later a large-scale deterrence mission. This is certainly not the only case in which an initial combat operation ends up turning into a long-term operation. Iraq, Afghanistan, Japan, and Europe have all followed a similar pattern. There are two key implications of this observation. First, military planners need to be aware of the apparent tendency for the United States to be pulled into long-term operations following initial combat operations. This means that decisions about intervening in a combat operation should include planning for a post-combat phase and possible long-term deterrent presence. Second, decisions about where and when to intervene should take into account the potential for a lasting U.S. presence and commitment. Another key observation emerging from this case is that when an intervention serves more than one strategic purpose, it is more likely to endure for a long time. In the case of Korea, the intervention not only served to protect South Korea, but also has provided the United States with a strategically important launching off point in the important Asia region and has been increasingly important as a coun-

terweight to China's growing presence. It is difficult to imagine the U.S. presence in Korea terminating at least in the near term, even if South Korean security was assured. It is worth noting that while Korea has also served as a staging point for interventions (such as Vietnam), rarely have troops been taken from Korea and deployed elsewhere. As noted previously, this suggests that troops involved in long-term deterrent missions are rarely available for use elsewhere. Finally, it is worth thinking about other possible threats that might warrant a new, deterrent interventions similar to Korea. The possible Russian threat to Eastern Europe is currently a particularly salient example, and is discussed more below. America's NATO commitment and the conventional military inferiority of NATO allies including Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania mean that there could be pressure for an enlarged deterrence mission to Eastern Europe.[177] Similarly, the U.S. involvement in combat operations in the Middle East and South Asia has already led to long-running stability operations and could gradually evolve into a longer term deterrent presence to protect newly formed governments from external threats and terrorists.

Deterrence

Military Advisory Group-Rep. of China, Taiwan, 1951

The root of the Taiwan military intervention can be traced to the support that the United States provided to the Nationalist Government of China or Kuomintang (KMT) as they fought both the Communists and the Japanese during World War II. While the Communist forces proved very successful at liberating the Chinese, the KMT were less successful but received significant U.S. support. This support did not end after the defeat of Japan and the ceasefire between the KMT and

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[177] David A. Shlapak and Michael Johnson, *Reinforcing Deterrence on NATO's Eastern Flank: Wargaming Defense of the Baltics*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-1253-A, 2016; Julianne Smith and Jerry Hendrix, *Assured Resolve: Testing Possible Challenges to Baltic Security*, Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Security, April 2016. For a short summary of the RAND research cited, see Dan De Luce, "If Russia Started a War in the Baltics, NATO Would Lose—Quickly," *Foreign Policy*, February 3, 2016.

the Communists. U.S. support was formalized on February 20, 1946, when President Truman directed the Secretaries of War and Navy to form a U.S. Military Advisory Group in China. Composed of an Army and a Navy Advisory Group, this organization was to "assist and advise the Chinese government in the development of modern armed forces for the fulfillment of those obligations which may devolve upon China under her international agreements, including the United Nations Organization, for the establishment of adequate control over liberated areas in China, including Manchuria and Formosa, and for the maintenance of internal peace and security."[178] Soon it became clear that the temporary ceasefire between the KMT and the Communists was unsustainable and the civil war resumed in July 1946. In the end, the civil war between the Nationalist Government of China (KMT) and the Communist Party of China resulted in KMT losing control over the mainland and retreating to Taiwan in 1949.

By the beginning of 1947 President Truman and his administration decided that the main strategic priorities were to prevent the spread of communism by helping Western Europe rebuild its economic and military capabilities and aiding Greece and Turkey in their fight against Soviet influence.[179] At its inception, China was not considered an important part of this limited containment strategy.[180] While the administration perceived the KMT Government's cause to be hopeless and intended to gradually distance the United States from the Chinese civil war, the KMT supporters in Congress, a group composed of mostly conservative Republicans, forcefully demanded a concentrated effort to save the KMT rule. Congressional pressure made the administration reconsider its policy toward China and start sending limited military supplies to the KMT in 1947.

[178] U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Relations with China: With Special Reference to the Period 1944–1949*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949, pp. 339–349, 939.

[179] On February 21, 1947, the Foreign Office sent a memorandum claiming that Great Britain would no longer be available to extend traditional economic and military assistance to Ankara and Athens due to its dire economic situation.

[180] Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947–1958*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996.

In November 1947, the Secretary of State further empowered the head of the Army Advisory Group to advise the KMT on military matters on an "informal and confidential basis." The Army and Navy Advisory Groups were succeeded on November 1, 1948, by the Joint United States Military Advisory Group—China. By the end of the year, however, the Joint Group was recalled. The NSC declared in October 1949, following the recommendation of the JCS, that "the U.S. Government does not intend to commit any of its armed forces to the defense of the island."[181] Truman then declared in January 1950 that "The United States Government will not pursue a course which will lead to involvement in the civil conflict in China. Similarly, the United States Government will not provide military aid or advice to Chinese forces on Formosa [Taiwan]."[182] This withdrawal seems to have been motivated by a shift in U.S. strategic priorities as the USSR emerged as an increasing threat to European allies.

The North Korean invasion of South Korea on June 25, 1950, was the turning point in U.S. policy toward Taiwan. President Truman authorized air and sea operations below the 38th parallel and ordered the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet to take up station in the Formosa Strait to deter a resumption of the conflict between the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China.[183] The intervention was swift, and military planners had to respond quickly to the new challenges. Shortly after the presidential announcement, the Commander of the 7th Fleet, and the Commander-in-Chief, Far East, visited Taiwan and "completed the arrangements for effective coordination between the U.S. forces and those of the Chinese [referring to Taiwan] government to

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[181] U.S. Army Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Note by the Secretaries to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the Strategic Importance of Formosa*, February 7, 1949, JCS 1966 Series, Microfilm Records of the JCS, 1946–1955, Far East: Roll 2.

[182] U.S. Government Printing Office, "President Truman's Statement on U.S. Policy Respecting the Status of Formosa, 5 January 1950," *American Foreign Policy*, 1950–1955, Basic Documents, Vol. 2, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961, p. 1669.

[183] Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume Two: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946–1952*, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1956, pp. 336–344; James F. Schnabel, Kenneth W. Condit, and Robert J. Watson, *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: The Korean War*, Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1979, pp. 36–53.

meet any attack."[184] Notably, the KMT government had a significant ground force under command[185] and was committed to fighting Communist China. Military planners dispatched a military assistance advisory group to Taiwan eight months after this joint survey.

The Military Assistance Advisory Group, Taiwan, commanded by Army Major General William C. Chase, was initially authorized with 67 Army, four Navy, and 63 Air Force personnel[186] and began its operations in April 1951.[187] Under the group's joint headquarters were Army, Navy, and Air Force sections. The group chief's military duties included the standardization of equipment, training methods, and doctrine, cooperation in the development of training programs, the establishment of any necessary U.S. training detachments, and the filing of reports on the KMT forces' progress, status of training, and ability to use U.S. equipment.

Warning Signs

The proximate trigger of the U.S. intervention in Taiwan was the unexpected invasion of South Korea by North Korean troops. However, looking back, there were several early warning signs that may have signaled an increased likelihood of eventual U.S. involvement in Taiwanese affairs. First, the intervention in Taiwan was part of the primary U.S. objective in the aftermath of World War II, specifically, containing the rising threat posed by the Soviet Union, its expansionist aspirations, and the spread of communism. For example, the Soviet Union was planning to increase its reach in the Persian Gulf and get access to the Turkish Straits, where Stalin hoped to build a new Mediterranean naval influence, posing a threat to U.S. strategic goals in the region. Second, relations with China had been deteriorating for some time.

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[184] Douglas MacArthur, "General MacArthur's Statement on His Trip to Formosa, August 1, 1950," Truman Library.

[185] The KMT Government had a standing army of about 600,000 and spent up to 75% of the country's GDP on defense.

[186] Joint Secretariat of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Historical Division, *Selected Aspects of U.S. Military Assistance*, 13 December 1961.

[187] General Chase arrived at Taipei, Taiwan, on May 1, 1951, to begin carrying out his duties as the head of MAAG.

Several months before the intervention, in February 1950, the Communist government seized U.S. consular property in China, leading to the withdrawal of U.S. personnel from the mainland in the spring. This event limited the diplomatic communication between the two countries. In the same month, the USSR and China signed the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, a defense pact that strengthened the alliance between the two countries and significantly increased the degree of threat to U.S. interests in the region, especially given that the USSR tested its first nuclear bomb a year earlier.[188] Third, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) was rapidly developing new capabilities, exemplified by a successful landing on Northern Hainan on April 10, 1950. The PLA achieved victory against 120,000 strong KMT forces despite having little experience in amphibious warfare. The PLA's military success suggested there was a clear imbalance between the two armies, and that the KMT may not have been able to defend Taiwan with its own forces. This capabilities imbalance between Communist China and the KMT changes suggested an increasingly worrisome threat emerging from China against a U.S. partner, Taiwan.

In addition to this emerging threat, several other factors, also highlighted in our statistical modeling, could have served as signposts of the intervention into Taiwan. For example, the United States had provided Taiwan with significant amounts of security assistance funds in the years leading up to the intervention. In addition, the U.S. economy was growing robustly, another factor often associated with deterrent interventions and had already established a close relationship with the KMT. Importantly, however, for military planners of the late 1940s, the intervention was not expected, especially given that Taiwan was not publicly included in the list of strategic priorities that President Truman had announced only a few years earlier.

Intervention Objectives

The initial objective of the intervention was to prevent "any attack on Formosa"[189] during the onset of the Korean War. The main deterrence

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[188] Christensen, 1996.

[189] Harry S. Truman, "Statement by the President on the Situation in Korea, June 27, 1950," *The American Presidency Project*.

capability of U.S. forces during much of the deployment was ensured by the presence of the 7th Fleet that limited the possibility of a naval invasion, while the Military Assistance Advisory Group was dispatched eight months after the naval intervention and was primarily charged with training the KMT army and providing the necessary equipment. In addition to keeping Taiwan from Communist control, the military intervention was intended to achieve a number of long-range national security objectives outlined in the NSC 48/5 "United States Objectives, Policies and Courses of action in Asia." These included establishment of stable, independent noncommunist governments friendly to the United States in Asia, reduction or elimination of the USSR's influence in Asia, development of key alliances in Asia that could protect U.S. security and interests in the region, and securing for the United States and its allies access to Asia's many material and natural resources. This policy guided U.S. commitments in Taiwan and was the basis for significant U.S. financial and technical support for KMT military forces[190] as well as an expanded program of covert operations by the CIA to support the anticommunist guerilla activities in South China.[191] In this context, defense of Taiwan worked toward many different strategic objectives in the region. The overarching utility of U.S. presence in Taiwan may, in fact, be one reason that the U.S. intervention in Taiwan lasted so long.

Taiwan policy remained largely unchanged during the Eisenhower administration. In his first State of the Union message Eisenhower announced that he had issued new orders for the Seventh Fleet, and that the Navy was no longer formally required to prevent military action against the Chinese mainland by KMT forces. However, this formal encouragement of KMT raids on the mainland was no more than a public recognition of the change in policy that occurred since Truman's first definition of the role of the Seventh Fleet. The administration did not want to fight a broader war with the People's Republic

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[190] National Security Council (NSC), *Staff Report Submitted to the Steering Committee, National Security Council*, #128, June 13, 1952.

[191] Allen Dulles, Report submitted by the Senior CIA Member of the National Security Council Staff to the Steering Committee on National Security Council #128, June 11, 1952.

of China (PRC), but wanted to pressure China into ending the Korean war, give up plans to conquer Taiwan, and pursue a less aggressive course of action in Indochina.

The U.S. intervention in Taiwan was viewed as an integral part of the U.S. strategy to contain China and reorient or replace the Communist regime there. Specifically, U.S. forces stationed in Taiwan and surrounding waters were part of the island defense system stretching from Japan to New Zealand that the United States would be prepared to defend.[192] In addition the NSC agreed that U.S. support for Taiwan should be based not only on the strategic significance of Taiwan and the military potential of the KMT forces, but also on the importance of the KMT government "as an essential weapon in the continuing political struggle with the communist world, especially the Chinese segment of it."[193] The administration was not prepared, however to use U.S. armed forces to support a KMT effort to reconquer the mainland.[194]

Resource Decisions and Constraints

The decision to deploy U.S. troops to deter an attack on Taiwan was accompanied by decisions about how to resource and fund the deployment and how much and what types of assistance to provide. The first large civilian aid package to the KMT government was passed under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1948 and was a result of congressional pressure to include China and Korea in Truman's foreign aid program that was primarily concentrated on rebuilding Europe and consolidating the North Atlantic Alliance. The European focus for financial and military aid changed with the beginning of the Korean War. In the early 1950s an increasing amount of military aid was going to Asia. This coincided with higher federal defense expenditures and more U.S troops deployed abroad. Thus, the deployment to Taiwan was in part funded and resourced by an increase in total defense spending, not a reallocation of forces or funds from one location to another.

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[192] National Security Council, #148, April 6, 1953.

[193] National Security Council, #146/2, Nov. 6, 1953.

[194] National Security Council, #166/1, Nov. 6, 1953.

Furthermore, compared with the overall deployment levels, the Taiwanese intervention was relatively modest, especially when focusing on the ground component specifically. This was in part explained by the significant fighting capabilities of the KMT government that had 600,000 troops and spent 75 percent of its GDP on defense. Military planners achieved the goal of providing deterrence by training and supplying local forces and providing air and naval interventions in the critical moments. This was less costly than maintaining a large presence on the ground.[195]

The number of personnel and the amount of equipment allocated to the intervention there waxed and waned quite flexibly over the course of the deployment. The U.S. deployment was at most points made up of more Air Force and Navy personnel than Army and Marine personnel. It began with the deployment of the Taiwan Military Advisory Group, which began with 134 people and rose to 3,500 troops during the First Taiwan Strait Crisis (1954–1955) and 7,000 troops during the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis (1958).

During the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, the bulk of Air Force personnel deployed to Taiwan came from Far East Air Forces (FEAF) (see Figure B.2). Internal documents suggest that resource trade-offs were considered when deciding how many and what types of forces to send to Taiwan. FEAF was concerned that deploying "too many military units to Taiwan [may] jeopardize the defense of other areas (Korea, Japan and Okinawa). . . . It was determined that a show of force, if necessary, could be made by rotating squadrons of FEAF's 18th Fighter Bomber Wing from Japan to the island as a part of training and familiarization program. . . . On 24 January 1955, JSC, with State and Defense approval ordered the entire 18th Fighter Bomber Wing (from Japan and Philippines) to Taiwan. . . . On 3 February 1955 the 18th Wing had 65 combat-ready aircraft."[196] The 18th Wing per-

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[195] Operations Coordinating Board memo, *Report on Taiwan and the Government of the Republic of China*, National Security Council #5723, April 20, 1959, National Archive, Defense Department, box MNR2, 1959.

[196] Jacob Van Staaveren, *Air Operations in the Taiwan Crisis of 1958*, USAF Historical Division Liaison Office, November 1962 (declassified in 1983).

Figure B.2
U.S. Troops in Taiwan 1950–1980
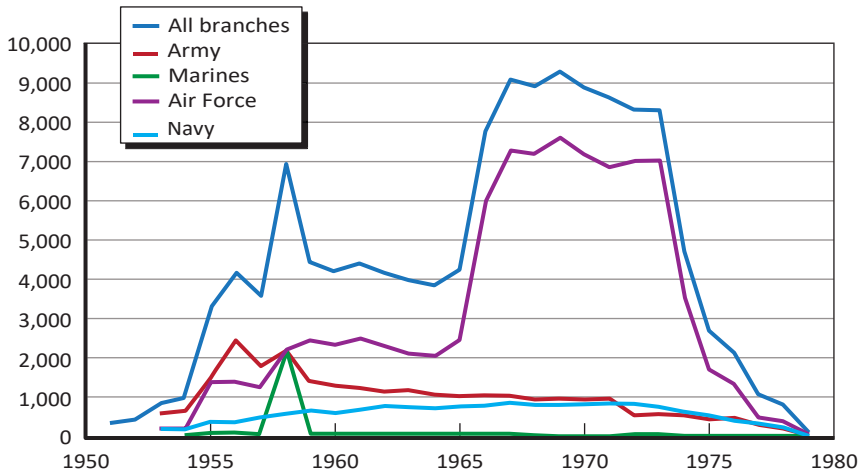
SOURCE: RAND dataset.

formed 206 sorties over Tachen and Nanchi islands in direct support missions for the KMT army in four days during the peak of the crisis. What had been initially planned as a show of force through a training exercise became a tactical operation.[197] By the end of the month the First Taiwan Strait crisis began to wane and 18th Aircraft Wing returned to its home station. Military planners continued to display air strength by putting into effect the CINPAC's squadron rotation plan. The 69th Fighter Bomber Squadron stationed at Clark AB was the first unit to rotate to Chiayi AB in February 1955. Other squadrons took its place initially at two week intervals and after July 1955 for longer periods. In January 1958 units were again deployed more frequently and for shorter periods.[198]

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[197] U.S. decided to evacuate 40,000 KMT troops and civilians from the Tachen Islands that were considered indefensible.

[198] H. B. Hull, *Taiwan Strait Crisis*, PACAF, July 1–December 31, 1958, Vol. 1, Pt. 1, pp. 10–11.

A similar scenario on a larger scale happened during the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis. In response to heavy shelling of islands controlled by the KMT Government, the JCS ordered carriers *Essex* in the Mediterranean and *Midway* in Pearl Harbor and their destroyer escorts plus other ships to reinforce the Sevenths Fleet in the Taiwan Strait. This became the largest naval force assembled since the Korean War. The Army also expedited a Nike battalion to Taiwan, and the JCS cautioned air commanders to be "prepared to make atomic strikes deep into Communist territory." In addition, USAF field commanders requested the Fifth Air Force's 16th Fighter Interceptor squadron stationed in Okinawa, and the Composite Air Strike Force (CASF) X-Ray Tango from United States (specifically the advanced command element F-100 squadron) to be relocated to Taiwan. Military planners carefully evaluated all intelligence data and authorized the relocation of the 16th Fighter Interceptor Squadron from Okinawa and the CASF X-Ray Tango from the United States five days after the initial request. The movement of CASF X-Ray Tango from the United States to Taiwan took about two to six days and was generally successful.

The steady-state was interrupted again in 1965, when Taiwan became a major Air Force hub that supported operations in the Vietnam War. The sharp increase in the Air Force troops started in April 1965, when the 479th Tactical Fighter Wing at George AFB, California, deployed two F-104C squadrons to Taiwan. In 1966, the Tactical Air Command reassigned the 314th Troop Carrier Wing from Naha Airbase in Okinawa to the Ching Chuan Kang Air Base in Taiwan to provide passenger, cargo and combat airlift in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War period. The Air Force maintained a substantial presence in Taiwan until the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. Army and Navy troops maintained a relatively steady state until Nixon's visit to China in 1972 and began a gradual withdrawal that ended with a full exit in 1979. As noted previously, one of the reasons the Taiwan deployment lasted so long was the strategic value of the U.S. presence in the region provided and the many strategic purposes the deployment was able to serve.

Duration and Withdrawal

Although force levels varied over the course of the deterrent deployment, the intervention itself was long, lasting for about 28 years between 1951 and 1979. However, the intervention is more accurately thought of as a number of different phases with Naval and ground components. The intervention started with the deployment of the 7th Fleet in the Taiwan Straits at the onset of the Korean War in order to prevent any conflict between the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China. This naval intervention was followed by the deployment of the Military Advisory Group that trained the Republic of China (ROC) army and coordinated the flow of military aid. For most of the duration of the intervention, the Military Advisory group had a relatively modest presence of several thousand people meant to enhance the ROC fighting capabilities rather than act as a potent military force by itself. This modest presence was augmented at several points based on the external threat from China and regional considerations such as the Vietnam War, as noted above.

There were several reasons that the deterrent intervention to protect Taiwan ended up being so lengthy. The United States maintained military involvement in Taiwan for 28 years mainly in order to contain the spread of communism in Asia and maintain leverage over the PRC.[199] In addition, the Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty[200] obligated the United States to secure Taiwan from the continuous threat of invasion by the PRC. The Sino-American alliance was underscored by the official recognition of the ROC government as the only legitimate government of China until 1979. This strategy started to change after the Sino-Soviet Split[201] affected the international communist movement and opened the way for improving the relations between the United States and the PRC.

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[199] National Security Council #48/5, May 17, 1951; and National Security Council #148, April 6, 1953.

[200] The Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States of America and the Republic of China was signed on December 2, 1954, and came into force on March 3, 1955.

[201] Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010, p. 1.

The U.S. exit from Taiwan was motivated at least in part by improving U.S. relations with the PRC, which accelerated after 1969 with the Soviet Border Conflict. The PRC attempted to improve the relations with the United States in order to counterbalance the USSR, a goal that the United States shared. Despite evidence of the PRC's continuous aid to the Communist movements in Vietnam and Cambodia, the United States initiated measures to relax trade restrictions and engage with the Beijing government. These efforts culminated with President Nixon visiting the PRC in 1972 and the publication of the Shanghai Communique where both nations pledged to work toward the full normalization of diplomatic relations. Nixon's visit was the turning point of the United States military intervention in Taiwan. The two countries intensified diplomatic contacts and established liaison offices in Washington and Beijing. The number of U.S. troops deployed in Taiwan gradually diminished over the following years and the intervention was formally terminated after the establishment of the diplomatic relations between United States and China in 1979. The Taiwan Mutual Defense Treaty was replaced by the Taiwan Relations Act that provides the legal basis for U.S.–Taiwan relations and remains in effect since 1979.

The existence of the Treaty in and of itself is unlikely to provide a significant deterrent against a possible Chinese intervention. Historically, the First, Second and Third[202] Taiwan Strait Crises demonstrated that deterrence against China was achieved only by deployment of large naval forces in the region.

Lessons for the Army

The intervention in Taiwan provides a number of lessons for the Army. First, as noted previously, while there were a number of signposts that could have served as early warning signs of an impending intervention in Taiwan, these warning signs were obscured by attention to threats in other regions and a failure to appreciate the significance of changes such as an increasingly powerful China and a gradually advancing

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[202] The Third Taiwan Strait Crisis (1995) followed roughly the same scenario as the first two and culminated with U.S. government deploying two aircraft battle groups, Carrier Group Seven and Carrier Group Five, to the region.

assistance relationship with the KMT. Second, the deterrent intervention in Taiwan is a good example of the fact that deterrent interventions, while not that numerous, tend to be very long. There are several reasons for the longer length, including the fact that deterrent interventions and the associated U.S. presence can support multiple U.S. objectives including other interventions in nearby countries or conflicts. Third, the Taiwan intervention highlights the fact, noted previously, that the types of troops deployed to a given intervention will depend very much on the location, activity, and context of the intervention. In Taiwan, for example, for much of the deployment, naval and Air Force personnel proved to be the most useful, but the mix of personnel also changed as the goals and objectives of the intervention changed. At other points, ground forces were able to provide needed training and expertise. The unit type data presented in Chapter Two can provide Army planners with additional insight into the types of troops that may be most valuable in specific types of circumstances.

Operation Southern Watch, Desert Strike, Desert Thunder, Persian Gulf, 1990s

After an U.S.-led ground offensive drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait in less than 100 hours, the George H. W. Bush administration resisted the temptation to expand its aims by marching on Baghdad and ousting Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. This decision was based on several factors, including a desire to keep the Iraqi state intact, the need to maintain the support of an international coalition, the belief that Saddam's military forces—especially the elite Republic Guard units—had been severely damaged, and the concomitant assumption that after such a defeat, Hussein could not hold onto power for long. Unfortunately, some of these assumptions proved to be wrong. Iraq became an intractable problem because Hussein's regime was quite resilient, allowing him to continually challenge the United States and its allies.

To deal with the problem of Iraq, the United States implemented a policy of containment. This strategy aimed to undermine Hussein's regime and to prevent him from again posing a threat to other states in the region. The military pieces of this policy were put in place over a period of several years as it became increasingly apparent that Saddam's

regime would survive. In April 1991, the United States established a safe haven for Kurdish refugees who were being attacked by Iraqi forces in Northern Iraq. Also during 1991, the United States established Task Force Freedom to assist in Kuwaiti reconstruction to help strengthen and stabilize the country. Similarly, in response to the Iraqi forces brutal attacks on Shia in the south of Iraq, the United States created Operation Southern Watch a no-fly zone below the 32nd parallel on August 26, 1992. It was hoped that the southern no-fly zone would weaken Saddam's regime and limit his ability to threaten his neighbors.[203]

Initially, there were relatively few U.S. forces in place to contain Iraq. The primary force included the approximately two hundred aircraft enforcing the northern and southern no-fly zones and the Army air defenses in Saudi Arabia.[204] The United States also prepositioned equipment in the region and occasionally deployed forces to exercise with it. For instance, the Army placed a brigade's worth of heavy equipment in Kuwait and several times a year soldiers deployed to Kuwait and exercised with the equipment as a part of exercise Intrinsic Action.[205] In addition to these regularly scheduled deployments, the United States found that it had to frequently rapidly surge forces into the Persian Gulf to respond to Iraqi provocations. For instance,

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[203] Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, *Confronting Iraq: U.S. Policy and the Use of Force Since the Gulf War*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MR-1146-OSD, 2000, p. 49.

[204] There were only 48 aircraft enforcing Operation Northern Watch. Operation Southern Watch typically consisted of approximately one hundred and sixty aircraft based in Saudi Arabia. On September 26, 1991, the 32d Air Defense Command deployed two Patriot missile battalions to Saudi Arabia for Operation Southern Watch. Michael Knights, *Cradle of Conflict: Iraq and the Birth of the Modern U.S. Military*, Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2005, p. 129; Dwight D. Oland and David W. Hogan Jr., *Department of the Army Historical Summary Fiscal Year 1992*, Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History United States Army, 2001, p. 38.

[205] Prior to that there was an Army task force consisting of 1,470 soldiers primarily from the 3d Battalion, 77 Armor stationed in Kuwait under the auspices of Operation Positive Force to ensure that Iraq complied with the cease fire agreements and did not reenter Kuwait. In 1993, the Intrinsic Action Task Force consisted of two armor companies, two mechanized infantry companies, an artillery battery, an engineer company, and logistical support. Oland and Hogan, 2001, p. 38; Stephen E. Everett and L. Martin Kaplan, *Department of the Army Historical Summary Fiscal Year 1993*, Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History United States Army, 2002, p. 56.

when Saddam massed forces near the Kuwait border in October 1994, the United States rapidly deployed more than 25,000 personnel to the region, including 6,987 soldiers to Kuwait.[206]

As a result of the frequent crises and deployments, over time the force containing Saddam grew in size and became more continuous. After the 1994 feint toward Kuwait, the United States continuously stationed F-16 fighter aircraft and A-10 attack aircraft at Al-Jaber airbase in Kuwait.[207] By 1995, the Army was "getting close to" having enough equipment prepositioned in Middle East for a full heavy division.[208] Around the same time exercise Intrinsic Action in Kuwait transitioned into providing a "near-continuous presence of an Army battalion task force."[209] These containment forces remained in place until the United States invaded Iraq in 2003.

Warning Signs

There were some early warning signs that could have indicated that a deterrent intervention in the Persian Gulf was on the horizon as early as the 1980s. First was the emergence of Saddam Hussein's regime as a regional aggressor. In particular, Saddam Hussein had a history of taking aggressive actions against his neighbors, launching an invasion of Iran in 1980 and then Kuwait in 1990. Moreover, beginning in the summer of 1990, there were numerous signs that an Iraq-Kuwaiti crisis was brewing as Saddam repeatedly made threats against the Gulf states.[210] Moreover, U.S. intelligence agencies detected Saddam's troop movements prior to the invasion of Kuwait, but they were dismissed as

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[206] Martin L. Kaplan, *Department of the Army Historical Summary Fiscal Year 1994*, Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History United States Army, 2000, p. 47.

[207] Knights, 2005, p. 150.

[208] Connie L. Reeves, *Department of the Army Historical Summary Fiscal Year 1996*, Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History United States Army, 2002, p. 75. In 1996, equipment for an armored battalion task force was put in Qatar.

[209] *Department of the Army Historical Summary Fiscal Year 1997*, Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History United States Army, 2005, p. 108. In one fiscal year a total of 3,100 soldiers rotated to Kuwait.

[210] Janice Gross Stein, "Deterrence and Compellence in the Gulf, 1990–91: A Failed or Impossible Task?" *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 2, Fall 1992, pp. 149–150.

posturing to strengthen his hand in negotiations with the Gulf States.[211] As a result of Iraq's history of aggressive behavior, excessive territorial claims, and the fact that Saddam retained significant military capabilities after the 1991 U.S. combat intervention, Iraq continued to pose a significant threat to Kuwait and other regional neighbors.

The significant threat posed by Saddam did not lessen after the end of the combat phase, despite U.S. expectations that Saddam would be quickly deposed by a military coup.[212] This continued threat was a key driver of the subsequent deterrent intervention and also an important signal that a deterrent intervention would occur. Because Saddam had proven to be an unrepentant and serial aggressor, he was someone who had to be checked. The persistence of Hussein's regime and the threat it posed forced the United States to gradually adopt a containment strategy that included economic sanctions, intrusive U.N. weapons inspections, two no-fly zones, and a military presence to prevent further Iraqi aggression.

Finally, characteristics of Kuwait itself added to the degree of threat and the need for a subsequent deterrent intervention. Kuwait is a small state that is vulnerable due to its unfavorable geography. Kuwait is blessed with significant oil reserves, but lacks strategic depth and shares long borders with two of its larger neighbors, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The imbalance in capabilities between Iraq and Kuwait and the overwhelming power of the U.S. military compared to allies in the region should also have served as warning signs for the eventual deterrent intervention in the region. Given the severe threat posed by Iraq to nearby allies, policymakers and military planners could have expected that at some point a greater U.S. intervention would be required.

Aside from the severe threat and context, the initial combat intervention itself was an important predictor of the subsequent deterrent intervention. Considering historical trends, there are few times that the United States has fought wars and not required a stability or deterrent intervention after the fact. Already in this chapter, we have

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[211] Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor, *The Generals' War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the Gulf*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995, p. 34.

[212] Knights, 2005, p. 120.

emphasized several times that combat interventions that are intended to be short and limited often transition into long running deployments. Whether future deterrent or combat interventions are required depends on whether the enemy is completely defeated or not. This is a case where an incomplete defeat of the enemy led to the need for a long running deterrent presence and ultimately another combat intervention in 2003.

Despite the existence of some important warning signs, however, in many respects, the long running commitment to defend Kuwait and deter Iraq's aggression in the region was a surprise. Before 1991, Kuwait was not a close U.S. ally or partner. In fact, the Kuwaiti regime had actively opposed the U.S. efforts to preposition equipment and secure basing rights in the Middle East in the 1980s.[213] It was only after Iran's attacks against Kuwaiti oil tankers during the Iran-Iraq war became a serious drain on its finances that Kuwait reached out and tried to gain U.S. support. Initially, the Reagan administration, which had little interest in Kuwait, rejected the Kuwaitis' request to reflag some if its oil tankers, but once the Soviets seemed prepared to help, the United States stepped in. But even while U.S. naval ships were protecting Kuwaiti oil tankers, Kuwait's government refused to allow them to refuel ashore or to make port calls. Instead they established a floating dock that met the needs of refueling while keeping the U.S. troops off their soil. After the reflagging operation ended, Kuwait remained of peripheral interest to the Bush administration, which was focused on managing the end of the Cold War. When the United States drove Iraq out of Kuwait in 1991, however, the relationship was fundamentally transformed.

The long-term deterrent presence in Kuwait was also unexpected even toward the end of the initial combat phase because of the widely held assumption that Saddam's regime would succumb to a coup soon after the humiliating military defeat. As a result of this assumption, little thought had been given to the postwar order. Nevertheless, Hussein's

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[213] Shafeeq Ghabra, "Kuwait and the United States: the Reluctant Ally and U.S. Policy," in David W. Lesch, ed., *The Middle East and the United States: A Historical and Political Reassessment*, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1996, p. 283; Chookiat Panaspornprasit, *U.S.-Kuwaiti Relations, 1961–1992: An Uneasy Relationship*, New York: Routledge, 2005, p. 133.

regime not only survived its expulsion from Kuwait, but it had sufficient strength to put down two simultaneous uprisings that began in the wake of Iraq's military defeat. It appeared that the Bush administration was misinformed about how much of Saddam's elite Republican Guard had been destroyed.[214]

The warning signs in the case of the deterrent intervention in Kuwait seem to have provided planners with some mixed signals. Clearly there was a significant remaining threat which the United States was uniquely positioned to deter, but this threat was somewhat underestimated by military and political officials at the time. Furthermore, the most threatened countries, those neighboring Iraq, had for the most part not been traditional U.S. allies. However, other factors such as the strategic importance of the Middle East and fears that an aggressive Iraq could spark or inflame tension or instability in other nearby states (including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict) should also have served as important, though perhaps more subtle, warning signs of the need for intervention.

Objectives

The objectives of the U.S. intervention in Kuwait in 1991 were clear. When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990, President George H. W. Bush soon announced that Baghdad's blatant act of aggression "will not stand."[215] The Bush administration determined that the invasion must be rolled back because it could not allow Saddam to maintain control over such a large percentage of the world oil resources nor did it want to set the post–Cold War precedent that territorial conquest was acceptable. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger noted that "if he [Saddam] succeeds, others may try the same thing."[216]

The U.S. post–Desert Storm operations against Iraq were intended to achieve multiple objectives, including deterring further Iraqi aggression externally, protecting Iraqi citizens from repression, dismantling Iraqi's weapons of mass destruction (WMD), stabilizing the region,

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[214] Gordon and Trainor, 1995, p. 424.

[215] H. W. Brands, "George Bush and the Gulf War of 1991," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, March 2004, p. 121.

[216] Ibid., p. 118.

and undermining Saddam's rule.[217] As a part of this containment strategy and DoD's newfound focus on regional adversaries, the United States expanded its military relationship with several Gulf states.[218] For instance, on September 19, 1991, the United States and Kuwait signed a wide-ranging defense pact that was to last for a decade.[219] This accord granted the United States the right to preposition equipment for one armored bridge and provided U.S. forces with access to Kuwaiti ranges and bases. The containment strategy relied on access to bases in several of the Gulf countries in addition to Kuwait. Although the Clinton administration did not want to focus on foreign policy, let alone Iraq, it adopted a policy of dual containment that aimed to contain both Iran and Iraq.[220] Former Secretary of State Madeline Albright explained, "of all the headaches inherited by the Clinton administration, Saddam Hussein was the most persistent."[221]

The U.S. military forces in the area were not only used as a bulwark against further attacks, but were also wielded in an effort to coerce Saddam to comply with these other demands. Their record in this regard is mixed. After Saddam's October 1994 feint toward Kuwait, large-scale conventional deterrence seemed quite strong as Hussein never again made large troop movements to threaten his neighbors.[222] But internally, as evidenced by Iraqi forces' 1996 attack on Irbil, Saddam still exerted a firm and ruthless grip on power.

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[217] Byman and Waxman, 2000, pp. 29–31.

[218] The United States also signed agreements with the following: Oman 1990, Saudi Arabia 1990, Bahrain 1990, Qatar 1992 and the UAE 1994. See Sami Hajjar, *U.S. Military Presence in the Gulf: Challenges and Prospects*, Carlisle, Pa.: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2002, p. 20.

[219] Kenneth Katzman, *Kuwait: Security, Reform, and U.S. Policy*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service RS21513, July 10, 2013, p. 13.

[220] Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Threatening Storm: The United States and Iraq: The Crisis, the Strategy, and the Prospects after Saddam*, New York: Random House, 2002, p. 65. For more on dual containment see Martin Indyk, *Innocent Abroad: An Intimate Account of American Peace Diplomacy in the Middle East*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014, pp. 30–43.

[221] Madeleine Albright, *Madame Secretary: A Memoir*, New York: Miramax Books, 2003, p. 272.

[222] Byman and Waxman, 2000, p. 57.

The intervention had succeeded at containing external conventional aggression, but it struggled with the more ambitious and difficult goals of preventing Saddam from using violence against his own population. Moreover, Saddam continually flouted U.N. Security Council Resolution 687, which called for the full disclosure and elimination of Iraqi WMD, by not complying with U.N. inspections. The United States also found that despite its best efforts that Saddam remained in power. Additionally, over time it became evident that the U.S.'s goal of stabilizing its allies was at cross-purposes with its need to repeatedly deploy large numbers of forces to their territory.[223] Consequently, as international support for the containment regime eroded, both the Clinton and the George W. Bush administrations concluded that the only solution to the problems posed by Saddam was regime change.[224]

Resource Decisions and Constraints

Containing Saddam Hussein for more than a decade strained U.S. forces, which were not permanently stationed in the Middle East but temporarily rotated to the region.[225] A fairly significant number of forces were needed to sustain the continuous rotations. Available evidence suggests that the majority of forces were deployed from the United States to Kuwait (rather than being drawn from Europe or other ongoing deterrent deployments), especially the 1st Cavalry Division, 24th Infantry Division, 10th Cavalry, 7th Cavalry, 9th Cavalry, 70th Armor. However, the need to constantly rotate new troops into the Persian Gulf to support the deployment drastically increased the effect that the deployment had on resources and personnel. Each new rotation requires preparation, personnel exchanges to ensure deployment units are fully manned, training, and then afterward, recovery.

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[223] Ibid., p. 31.

[224] After years of repeated crisis, culminating in Operation Desert Fox in 1998, the Clinton administration concluded that the solution to the problem of Saddam was regime change. Pollack, 2002, p. 94.

[225] Byman and Waxman, 2000, p. 75. In the fall of 1994, for instance, DoD reported that three of the twelve active Army divisions faced readiness shortfalls because of deployments to Rwanda, Haiti, and Kuwait. David McCormick, *The Downsized Warrior: America's Army in Transition*, New York: New York University Press, 1998, p. 48.

Maintaining a continuous rotational presence therefore eroded the readiness of the force due to extensive churn in personnel and the fact that due to deployments, many forces were unable to conduct the full spectrum of training.[226] The high Operational Tempo hurt morale and readiness. For instance in Fiscal Year 1999, 8.6 percent of the reporting Army units exceeded the goal of being deployed less than 120 days, while 3.7 percent were deployed for more than 180 days.[227] For the Army, these problems were not uniform but impacted certain specialties more than others.[228]

Meanwhile, the U.S. military was called upon to conduct multiple operations overseas, often at the same time. By 1999, the number of deployments for the Army had tripled since the end of the Cold War, while it had lost ten component divisions.[229] For instance, in 1994, during the October crisis with Iraq, the United States was also engaged in major operations in Bosnia, Haiti, and South Korea.[230] Other interventions including Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo (also based on rotational forces, all also overlapped with the deterrent intervention in the Gulf, adding to the strain placed on the force at the time.[231] Commanders responded to personnel shortages by asking soldiers to work outside of their specialties, for example assigning infantry and armor personnel to maintenance, supply, and personnel administrative tasks, and assigning soldiers to temporary work. To be clear, this was a problem that affected the Army more generally and not just those deployed

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[226] Polich, Orvis, and Hix, 2000.

[227] Jeffrey A. Charlston, *Department of the Army Historical Summary Fiscal Year 1999*, Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History United States Army, 2006, pp. 48–49.

[228] The most deployed specialties in FY 1999 included field artillery firefinder radar operator, field artillery meteorological crew member, cavalry scout, fighting vehicle infantrymen, psychological operations specialist, bridge crewmember, AH-64 armament/electrical systems repairer, counterintelligence agent, M1 tank armor crewman, combat engineer, and interrogator, Charlston, 2006, p. 49.

[229] Charlston, 2006, pp. 48–49.

[230] Some high-demand low density assets were particularly stressed. For instance, in March 1994, the 2d Battalion, 7 Air Defense, deployed to Korea and therefore could not be sent to the Middle East. Kaplan, 2000, p. 65.

[231] Polich, Orvis, and Hix, 2000.

to the Persian Gulf, but it certainly also affected the deterrent deployment in the Middle East.[232]

The financial costs of containing Saddam were somewhat defrayed by host nation support. Kuwait, in particular, contributed $16.059 billion to Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storms and made annual payments of approximately $350 million during the containment years.[233]

Duration and Withdrawal

The longevity of the U.S. deployment to Kuwait is mostly explained by the fact that the Iraqi threat remained until 2003, and under no circumstances could the tiny state of Kuwait (which has a military of approximately 15,000) defend itself. Moreover, unlike many other states in the region, the Kuwaiti public has a positive view of the United States.[234] The fact that there is public in addition to government support for an U.S. military presence may help to explain why the U.S. presence in Kuwait persists today. A Senate staff report published in 2012 stated that the United States was planning to keep 13,500 U.S. troops in Kuwait indefinitely. After Saddam was toppled in 2003, the government of Kuwait desired a U.S. deterrent presence as a hedge against a Shia-dominated Iraqi government and Iran.[235] More recently, U.S. presence in Kuwait may not only serve to protect Kuwait from neighboring states, but also as a counterbalance to the proliferation of other threats in the region including ISIS and more general political instability.

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[232] Mark Gebicke, *Testimony before the Subcommittee on Readiness and Military Personnel, Committee on National Security, House of Representatives, Observations on Personnel Readiness in Later Deploying Army Divisions*, General Accounting Office, March 20, 1998, GAO/T-NSIAD-98-126.

[233] Katzman, 2013, p. 14.

[234] U.S. Senate, *The Gulf Security Architecture: Partnership with the Gulf Cooperation Council*, a majority staff report prepared for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, One Hundred Twelfth Congress, Second Session, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, June 19, 2012, p. 12.

[235] Katzman, 2013, p. 18.

Lessons for the Army

The deterrent deployment to the Persian Gulf in the 1990s has several lessons for the Army. First, the need for a deterrent deployment arose due to the decision to leave Saddam Hussein in power following his defeat in Kuwait. While regime change was not the original goal of the U.S. intervention into Kuwait, the failure to completely remove the threat Hussein's regime posed to Kuwait and other regional neighbors created the need for a long-running deployment, military exercises, sanctions, air strikes, and ultimately another intervention in 2003. This is not the only time when failure to complete the initial mission or the decision to terminate an intervention before the situation was fully stable necessitated additional interventions in the future. This pattern suggests that planning for the termination of an intervention may need to be just as extensive as planning for its initiation and execution. It also suggests that military planners and policymakers need to be careful of demanding or executing a withdrawal before considering the likely consequences not only in the near term, but also in the longer term. The political benefits or cost savings that an immediate withdrawal may bring must also be weighed against the potential future costs of a second or third intervention.

Second, the intervention is yet another reminder that interventions intended to be short and limited can become long term and even a permanent element of U.S. foreign posture. In this instance, the U.S. intervention became an enduring one first because the threat posed by Saddam did not wane and then as part of U.S. operations in Iraq. Even now, U.S. presence in Kuwait plays an important deterrent role in the region and also as a piece of U.S. attempts to halt the spread of ISIS. However, at points, maintaining a sizable deterrent presence in Kuwait along with all the ongoing military operations and commitments placed significant resource stress on the U.S. military. This deployment and others contributed to increased OPTEMPO in the 1990s and interrupted typical training cycles for military personnel, while also creating resource and logistical stress for Army personnel and planners. The stress created was also most severe for specific specialties, an uneven effect which had particularly damaging implications for Army readiness in the stressed areas. It is important for Army planners to keep in

mind that long-term rotational deterrent deployments against active threats such as those posed by Hussein's regime can be very taxing on the Army and can have long term implications for readiness, training, and the condition of equipment and personnel. This is especially true when these deployments are staffed using rotational forces to achieve a permanent presence. Permanent forward presence requires fewer units to achieve the same number of forward deployed troops and reduces the churn associated with frequent rotations. However, political sensitivities in many host nations, especially those in the Middle East, as well as international sensitivities (such as Russia's sensitivity to having NATO forces in the Baltics) can make this difficult or contentious and is one reason that the United States continued to rely on rotational forces in the Persian Gulf rather than using permanent forces as were used in Europe during the Cold War. Finally, the experience in Kuwait also warns against the common assumption and perhaps myth of the "short limited deployment" that policymakers often like to sell the public.

Operation Atlantic Resolve, Baltics, 2014

In the wake of the Russian Federation's March 2014 annexation of Crimea and subsequent intervention in Eastern Ukraine, NATO members—especially those on the alliance's eastern flank—became concerned that they too might find themselves exposed to Russian aggression. NATO's Article 5 mission of collective defense received renewed attention as the West adopted new measures to strengthen European security. For its part, the United States launched Operation Atlantic Resolve in April 2014 to deter further Russian aggression and signal its commitment to the NATO alliance. Operation Atlantic Resolve began by sending 150 soldiers each to Poland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.[236] Since that first deployment, U.S. forces have carried out a host of training exercises, rotational deployments, and posture enhancements in Eastern Europe (initially in Poland and the Baltic States, but eventually in Romania and Bulgaria as well) under the

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[236] Matt Millham, "173rd Rotates Units in Poland, Baltics to Maintain Regional Presence," *Stars and Stripes*, June 20, 2014.

umbrella of Atlantic Resolve.[237] During large-scale exercises, smaller U.S. rotational deployments can be bolstered significantly by additional forces; during the Trident Juncture exercise in November 2015, 5,000 U.S. personnel took part. More activities are planned for the future. In 2017, 18,000 U.S. personnel are expected to participate in 28 exercises with NATO allies.[238] The rotational deployment of an Armored Brigade Combat Team is also planned in 2017 and could add another 5,000 U.S. soldiers.[239] The growth of Operation Atlantic Resolve has demonstrated a significant political and financial commitment to collective defense and deterrence.[240]

Warning Signs

A number of warning signs emerged in the years leading up to the start of Operation Atlantic Resolve that signaled a potential U.S. intervention in the Baltics. The most significant indicator in this instance was the emerging threat presented by an increasingly aggressive Russia against NATO allies, particularly those close to Russian borders. Poland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were viewed as the next possible targets of Russia's revanchist foreign policy.[241] The Baltic States were seen as especially at risk. As former Soviet republics, the Baltic States are viewed by Russia as part of its "near abroad" sphere of influence. Russian interference in their affairs continued even after they gained independence and joined NATO. Border disputes, an anti-Western media campaign, and cyberattacks have characterized the tense relations between Russia and the Baltic States. There are also worries that the sizeable Russian-speaking minorities in the Baltic States could be used

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[237] John Vandiver, "Atlantic Resolve Mission Pushes Beyond Baltics into Romania," *Stars and Stripes*, March 24, 2015.

[238] U.S. European Command, 2016.

[239] Andrew Tilghman, "More U.S. Troops Deploying to Europe in 2017," *Military Times*, February 2, 2016.

[240] Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller), *European Reassurance Initiative, Department of Defense Budget Fiscal Year (FY) 2017*, February 2016.

[241] STRATFOR, *The Baltic States Turn a Wary Eye Toward Ukraine*, March 7, 2014.

as a pretext—and a facilitator—for a Crimean-style intervention.[242] In addition to the direct threat posed to Poland and the Baltic States, there was a fear that further Russian aggression against those countries might undermine the integrity of the broader NATO alliance. U.S. Army Europe commander Lt. Gen. Frederick Hodges stated in 2015, "I am sure that their No. 1 objective is to fracture the alliance. . . . If countries don't believe fellow members would respond in an Article 5 situation, then they've really created a serious crack in the alliance and what it stands for."[243]

The severity of the threat posed by Russia to the Baltics became unavoidably clear following the invasion of Crimea, a move that took many senior military officials by surprise; few foresaw Russia escalating the situation to the extent it did (despite the Russian-Georgian War in 2008).[244] According to media reports, this extended to members of the U.S. Intelligence Community, which discounted Russia's pre-intervention military build-up.[245] Then-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martine Dempsey stated, "Russia's actions remind us that the world today remains unpredictable. . . . The world continues to surprise us, often in unpleasant ways."[246] This element of surprise, coupled with the implications of fewer military resources in Europe due to the United States' geopolitical shift to Asia (discussed below), indicates that despite the emergence of a clear Russian threat and the increasingly antagonistic relationship between Russia and NATO more generally, the United States was not immediately prepared to begin a new deterrent operation in 2014. However, since senior military and

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[242] Luke Coffey and Daniel Kochis, "The Baltic States: The United States Must be Prepared to Fulfill Its NATO Treaty Obligations," *The Heritage Foundation*, September 29, 2015.

[243] Michelle Tan, "Army Expands Operation Atlantic Resolve to Six Countries," *Army Times*, February 20, 2015.

[244] Magnus Christiansson, *Strategic Surprise in the Ukraine Crisis: Agendas, Expectations and Organizational Dynamics in the EU Partnership Until the Annexation of Crimea, 2014*, thesis, Stockholm: Swedish National Defence College, 2014.

[245] Josh Rogin and Eli Lake, "U.S. Told Ukraine to Stand Down as Putin Invaded," *Bloomberg*, August 21, 2015.

[246] Cheryl Pellerin, *Hagel, Dempsey Outline U.S., Partner Approach to Ukraine*, U.S. Department of Defense, March 5, 2014.

political leaders perceived the threat Russia posed to the Baltic States, the United States has taken new measures to prepare for a confrontation with Russia, with Operation Atlantic Resolve among the most prominent. Russian forces first entered Crimea in February 2014, and it was only two months later, in April, when the first ground component of Atlantic Resolve (600 soldiers sent to Poland and the Baltic States) was unveiled. U.S. European Command used this time to craft a plan that would send a strong deterrent signal while not exacerbating existing tensions.[247] While combat interventions often require immediate response, deterrent interventions often have longer lead time, which can facilitate more planning.

In addition to the emerging threat, there were several other indicators that could have provided earlier warning of the need for a new deterrent intervention in the Baltics and afforded planners additional lead and planning time. First among these was the close alliance relationship between the United States and NATO allies, including Poland and the Baltic States. The United States has had a decades-long interest in supporting NATO, and the alliance remains one of its foreign policy priorities. In April 2014, while the United States might not have been predisposed to send forces to Eastern Europe due to resource constraints stemming from budget cuts, pressure to downsize, ongoing commitments in Afghanistan, and a limited military assistance relationship with the region, it was certainly inclined to act to protect the broader integrity of NATO. This suggests that when making decisions about military interventions, the United States may place special weight on protecting close allies and U.S. foreign policy interests, even in the face of resource challenges or other factors that might otherwise prevent a ground intervention. For Operation Atlantic Resolve, deterrence was necessary not just for the sake of Poland and the Baltic States, but also for the credibility of Article 5 collective defense.[248] As Lt. Gen. Hodges pointed out, a failure to demonstrate NATO's resolve

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[247] Jesse Granger, "Operation Atlantic Resolve: A Case Study in Effective Communication Strategy," *Military Review*, January–February 2015, pp. 116–123.

[248] Martin Hurt, "Preempting Further Russian Aggression Against Europe," *The Heritage Foundation*, 2015.

in one defensive situation could signal weakness to possible adversaries and embolden them to act elsewhere.

Another possible factor, related to but distinct from the emerging Russian threat, is the need to hedge against an unpredictable adversary. Recent Russian actions in its "near abroad" and beyond have demonstrated that it can act in surprising, unanticipated ways. The Russian-Georgian War in 2008, the Crimean annexation in 2014, and the later Syrian intervention in 2015 were unexpected moves.[249] In addition, Russia's military thinking increasingly embraced "hybrid" warfare that emphasizes a union of ambiguous political influence operations with conventional military activities. Some of the same ingredients that facilitated Russia's use of hybrid warfare in Ukraine are also present in the Baltic States, raising concerns that Russia might pursue a similar course of action there.[250] In this context, traditional indicators of conflict, such as a territorial claim, might not be present. Since it is difficult to tell when—or how—an unpredictable adversary will act next, there may be the need for the United States to "get out ahead" of a fluid threat by intervening in a place that does not suggest an overt, imminent danger of conflict.

Notably, despite numerous warning signs, our models did not suggest that the intervention in Operation Atlantic Resolve was likely. This is due to low levels of military assistance to Poland and the Baltic States prior to the intervention, middling U.S. GDP growth, and the lack of an explicit Russian territorial claim against Poland and the Baltics, all factors that according to the statistical model, are closely associated with the likelihood of a deterrent intervention. On this last point, though the Baltic states certainly felt at risk, the threat from Russia was general in nature and not linked to a specific dispute. Other factors discussed above but not captured by the model might better help explain the decision to intervene in the Baltics: potential threats to

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[249] Alain Guidetti, "V. Putin After Syria: Still Master Tactician and Poor Strategist?" *Geneva Centre for Security Policy*, March 23, 2016; David Vergun, *Georgia Case of "Strategic Surprise," Says Expert*, Army.mil, August 10, 2015.

[250] Alexander Lanoszka, "Russian Hybrid Warfare and Extended Deterrence in Eastern Europe," *International Affairs*, Vol. 92, No. 1, January 2016, pp. 175–195.

broader U.S. interests and alliances and the presence of an unpredictable adversary who has already demonstrated a willingness to violate the sovereignty of neighbors.

Objectives

The objectives of Operation Atlantic Resolve have remained constant since its inception in April 2014. Through an augmented presence in Europe along with a robust training and exercise schedule, the United States aims to show its commitment to the NATO alliance, deter further Russian aggression, and build ally capacity.[251] The most recent version of the European Assurance Initiative, which provides funds for Atlantic Resolve, has introduced a number of new activities that place a greater emphasis on deterrence.[252] This change represents more of an augmentation rather than a change in direction for Atlantic Resolve, however.

Resource Decisions and Constraints

Operation Atlantic Resolve came during a time of downsizing for the U.S. Army overall and for the U.S. Army in Europe in particular. In January 2012, proposals were announced which would remove eight Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) from the Army, with two of those coming from Europe. Financial and strategic factors contributed to this reduction. Constrained budgets necessitated the beginning of an accelerated drawdown in Army forces to 420,000 personnel.[253] Meanwhile, the United States began to pursue its "pivot" to Asia, in which it would leverage its resources to the Pacific in an attempt to secure for itself a leading role in a region growing rapidly in economic power. Asia's economic growth was also accompanied by a number of security issues, such as China's growing military power and North Korea's nuclear program. Europe, in contrast, was viewed as a secure region characterized more by democratization and institutional integration than by conflict.

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[251] U.S. European Command, 2016.

[252] Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller), February 2016.

[253] Andrew Feickert, *Army Drawdown and Restructuring: Background and Issues for Congress*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service R42493, February 28, 2014.

With a growing manpower investment in Asia looming, a large military presence in Europe was seen as superfluous. Ten thousand personnel were removed from Europe—including two Armored Brigade Combat Teams (ABCTs).[254] When the need for greater forces in Europe returned, the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) was announced by President Barack Obama in June 2014.[255] The ERI provides funding for Atlantic Resolve activities and deployments, including a rotationally deployed ABCT. The ERI has also provided substantial funding, with its first year offering $1 billion and its latest budget request, for fiscal year 2017, providing $3.4 billion.[256]

It is important for military planners to note the juggling of resources taking place in the background of Operation Atlantic Resolve. When the United States shifts its strategic emphasis from one region to another, resources may fluctuate accordingly, limiting the deterrent presence it can maintain. Even when old threats reappear, resources may take time to become available again; furthermore, resources may be provided at a lower level to which planners were previously accustomed. In Atlantic Resolve, initial deployments were sourced from forces already in Europe, and only later did further assets and funds become available through the ERI.[257] Even then, however, those enhancements did not fully restore U.S. capabilities lost in the region in 2012.[258] For example, U.S. Army aviation has been particularly stressed during Operation Atlantic Resolve. The Army's Combat Aviation Brigade in Europe lost five of seven battalions to earlier restructuring initiatives. Faced with these resource constraints and Atlantic Resolve's high tempo of training exercises, commanders have been forced to spread out their forces and commit fewer rotary assets

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[254] R. Taft Blackburn, *The Drawdown in Europe: What Does It Mean?* Carlisle, Pa.: U.S. Army War College, April 30, 2014.

[255] The White House, *Remarks by President Obama and President Komorowski of Poland in a Joint Press Conference*, whitehouse.gov, June 3, 2014.

[256] Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller), February 2016.

[257] Kacprzyk, 2015.

[258] The Heritage Foundation, *2016 Index of U.S. Military Strength: Europe*, 2015.

to individual operations.[259] The 2017 ERI will seek to address this deficiency by returning helicopter battalions to Europe, but these will, like the new ABCT, be deployed only on a rotational basis, meaning that resource stress is likely to continue to be an issue facing Operation Atlantic Resolve as it continues.[260]

Duration and Withdrawal

From the outset of Operation Atlantic Resolve, the possibility that it would be a long-term effort was certainly clear to the United States. According to the U.S. European Command, "Operation Atlantic Resolve will remain in place as long as the need exists to reassure our allies and deter Russia from regional hegemony."[261] President Obama echoed this in his September 2014 speech in Tallinn, telling Estonians that their independence "will always be guaranteed by the strongest military alliance the world has ever known."[262] Furthermore, though the first iteration of the ERI was a one-year, emergency measure, subsequent versions now represent a long-term commitment to European security.[263] Joint U.S.-allied military exercises have continued at a steady pace, demonstrating multinational military capabilities and commitment.[264] The Dragoon Ride operations, in which U.S. Army cavalry soldiers conduct road marches and demonstrations throughout Atlantic Resolve countries, have been some of the most prominent examples.[265]

At the same time, the antagonistic relationship between Russia and NATO shows little sign of rapprochement. Tensions have remained

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[259] Michelle Tan, "Army Europe Leaders Want More Helicopters to Fill 'Aviation Deficit,'" *Army Times*, December 1, 2015.

[260] John Vandiver, "Recon, Special Ops, and Choppers get Boost in Europe," *Stars and Stripes*, February 10, 2016.

[261] U.S. European Command, 2016.

[262] The White House, September 3, 2014.

[263] Mark F. Cancian and Lisa Sawyer Samp, *The European Reassurance Initiative*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 9, 2016.

[264] U.S. European Command, 2016.

[265] Jennifer Bunn, "2CR Dragoon Ride II Begins," *U.S. Army*, May 27, 2016.

high as Russia maintains a belligerent posture. Russia has carried out a series of large scale snap exercises—military drills executed with minimal warning—involving tens of thousands of Russian troops in close proximity to the Baltic region.[266] Russian aircraft have repeatedly harassed NATO ships and aircraft by flying dangerously close as they conduct interceptions and practice attack runs.[267] Recently, in April 2016, Russian attack jets flew over a U.S. Navy destroyer multiple times at an extremely low altitude.[268]

This combination of U.S. resolve and Russian belligerence indicates that the need for deterrence in Eastern Europe will not soon abate. As noted above, U.S. senior leadership has recognized this fact and is viewing Operation Atlantic Resolve as a long-term effort. This appreciation of the longevity of deterrence interventions is important, because the United States' history amply demonstrates that they can be enduring commitments. Worldwide deterrence during the Cold War, an ongoing presence in Korea, and multiple operations in Iraq after the Gulf War all required sustained U.S. resources. Recognizing this trend at the onset of an intervention will help planners make more accurate assumptions about the assets and resources necessary to support effective deterrence. If the last time the United States was required to support European deterrence is any guide, Operation Atlantic Resolve could be quite long-lived.

Lessons for the Army

This case suggests two key lessons for the Army, both alluded to in the section above. First, the case suggests the importance of U.S. strategic interests and alliances in driving U.S. deterrent interventions. While explicit territorial claims are a key driver of deterrent interventions such as those in Korea, Taiwan, and Kuwait, more overarching strategic goals, such as the threat posed by Russia, are just as important. The

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[266] Hurt, 2015.

[267] Ian Kearns, Lukasz Kulesa, and Thomas Frear, "Russia—Dangerous Brinksmanship Continues," *European Leadership Network*, March 12, 2015.

[268] Sam LaGrone, "Russian Fighters Buzz USS Donald Cook in Baltic Sea," *USNI News*, April 13, 2016.

threat posed by Russia to the Baltics is perceived as significant even though there has not (yet) been a territorial claim. Russia is not alone in its use of ambiguous warfare and nonmilitary means, so this factor could have an impact on the likelihood of other interventions as well. Other potential U.S. rivals, such as China and Iran, have used similar tactics that fall short of overt military aggression but that still threaten U.S. and allied interests.[269] In the future, the United States may need to engage in deterrent interventions to dissuade such activity. The second key lesson concerns the "stickiness" of U.S. resource allocation decisions. As noted above, resources cannot shift as quickly as strategic priorities or policy decisions. The decision to reorient U.S. forces toward Asia and to drawdown U.S. forces in Europe may thus have longer term implications on the ability of the United States to support a sufficiently large deterrent intervention to deter Russia from taking further aggressive action, at least in the near term. This perhaps suggests the need for a more flexible, responsive, and mobile force that allows for a more rapid reallocation of personnel and resources when priorities and demands shifts, as they so often do. The lead time required to initiate new deterrent interventions also highlights the necessity of close attention to emerging threats and other key warning signs that may indicate the future need for a new intervention. The case suggests the importance that the United States places on protecting key strategic allies, including especially NATO allies and places such as Japan and Korea. Even interventions that seem unlikely due to resource constraints or preexisting strategies may occur when new threats to important U.S. allies or high priority U.S. interests emerge. While increasing the size of the U.S. military may be difficult politically and economically at this point, there are times when having slack capacity to address new emerging challenges may be an important strategic advantage.

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[269] Ben Connable, Jason H. Campbell, and Dan Madden, *Stretching and Exploiting Thresholds for High-Order War*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-1003-A, 2016.

Trends in Unit Type Use

In this appendix we provide supplementary data and discussion about trends in unit type use over time. The figures show the frequency of use of our different unit types over the period covered by the dataset. Looking first at use of combat arms units, Figure C.1 shows that the demand for combat arms forces has remained high and fairly constant over time, even as the number of conventional wars has declined. There was some increase in use of combat arms troops throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s and then again in the early 2000s. Notably, however, there does seem to be a slight decline in the past six years, but it is difficult to say for sure whether this is the start of an extended trend or just a temporary fluctuation. Overall, however, the trends illustrated here suggest that combat arms troops, including light and mechanized infantry, continue to serve important functions for the military.

Unsurprisingly, demand for combat support units and sustainment units (e.g., supply, transport) has also remained high and fairly consistent over time (Figures C.2 and C.3). Since about 2005, however, the percent of interventions involving combat support troops does seem to have declined somewhat, mirroring the trend in the use of combat arms troops. Notably, trends in the use of combat support and combat arms troops are similar, implying that the two sets of units often deploy together. In contrast, demand for sustainment units has remained high throughout the time period under consideration. This makes sense as the functions provided by sustainment units are crucial for all types of interventions.
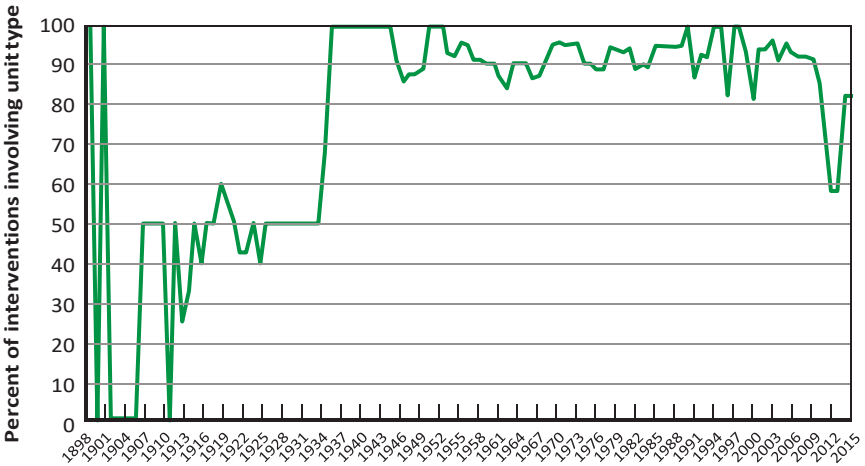
Figure C.1
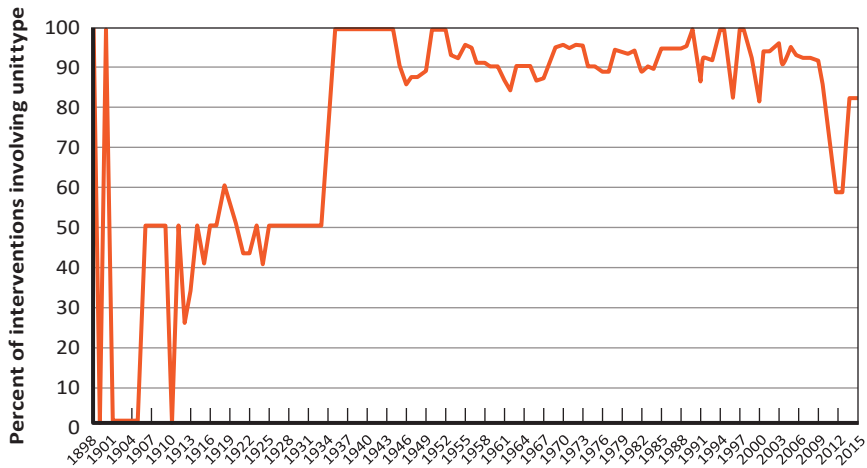**Use of Combat Arms Units**
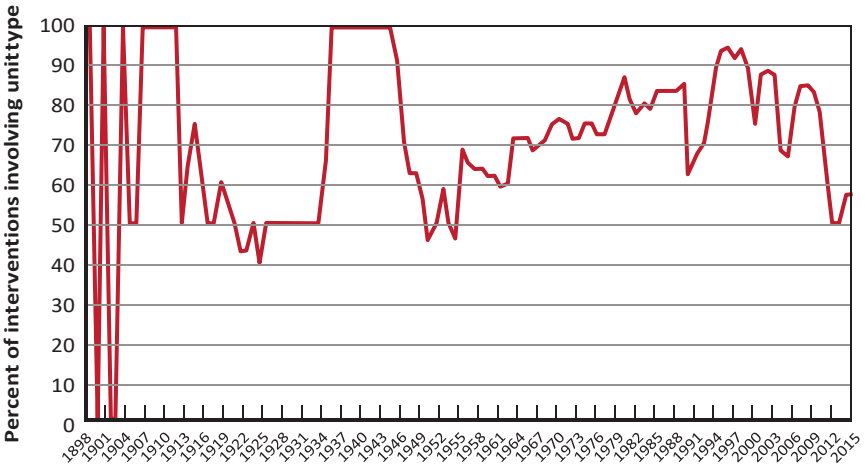
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-C.1*

Figure C.2
Use of Combat Support Units

SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-C.2*

Figure C.3
Use of Sustainment Units

SOURCE: RAND analysis.
RAND *RR1831A-C.3*

In contrast, the use in "fires" units (Figure C.4), which includes units such as field artillery, does seem to have declined more substantially in recent years, after remaining high through about 2010, likely due to operations Afghanistan and Iraq. The decline in the use of fires units may also reflect a shift in the nature of conflict and in the types of operations conducted by the U.S. military. Specifically, traditional fires units may be less useful in nontraditional conflicts and nonconventional battlefields.

Trends in the use of special operations units, including Green Berets and Army Rangers as well as occupations such as civil affairs, show the opposite pattern however. Figure C.5 shows clearly that the reliance on special operations units has increased dramatically over time as they have become more involved in all types of missions, ranging from train-and-assist, to security cooperation, to COIN, and to peacekeeping and humanitarian activities. This is a particularly important trend when viewed in concert with the slight decline in the use of combat arms troops, as it suggests a change in the way ground operations are conducted and may have implications for training and manning decisions as well.

Figure C.4
Use of Fires Units
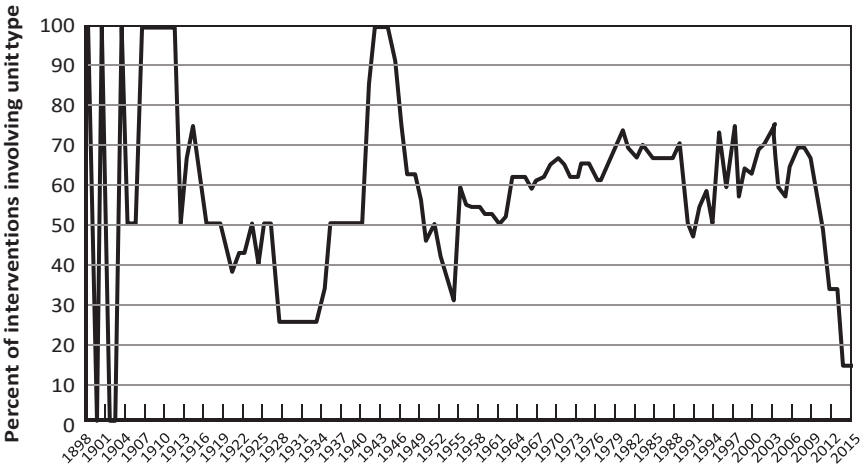
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

Figure C.5
Use of Special Operations Units
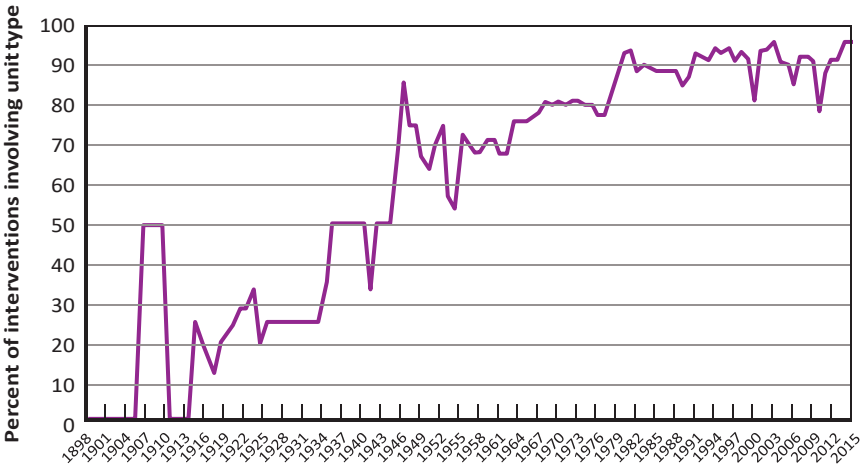
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

The use of aviation units has also increased fairly substantially since its levels during World War I, but has declined since reaching peaks during World War II and again in the 1990s (Figure C.6). Use of aviation forces has declined rather substantially since about 2009. While this does seem to suggest that perhaps aviation units are playing a less central role in today's interventions, it is also the case that anecdotally, when aviation units have been used, they are often vitally important to mission completion.

Intelligence units have also played a significant role in ground interventions, one that has remained fairly consistent over time (Figure C.7). However, it is worth noting that as a percentage of all interventions, intelligence units are somewhat less used than other types of units, such as combat arms and combat support. This makes sense, as intelligence units play a more specialized role.

Finally, Figure C.8 shows the use of engineer units. Throughout the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and until about 2009, engineering units were involved in about 70–80 percent of interventions in any

Figure C.6
Use of Aviation Units
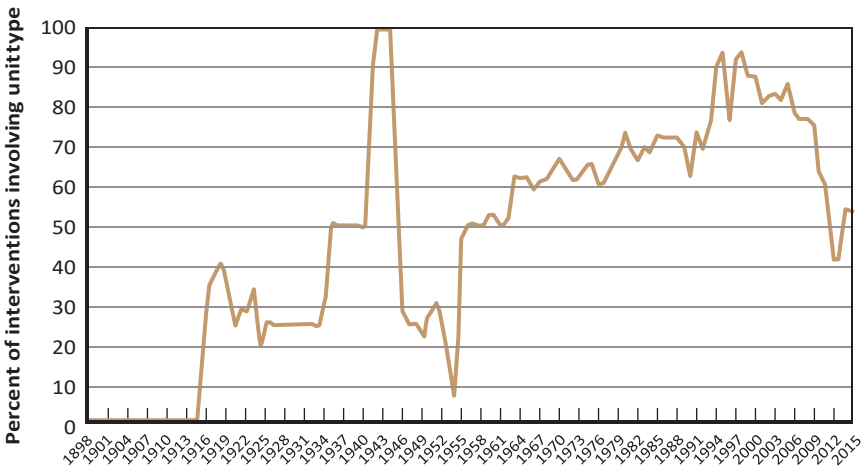
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-C.6*

Figure C.7
Use of Intelligence Units
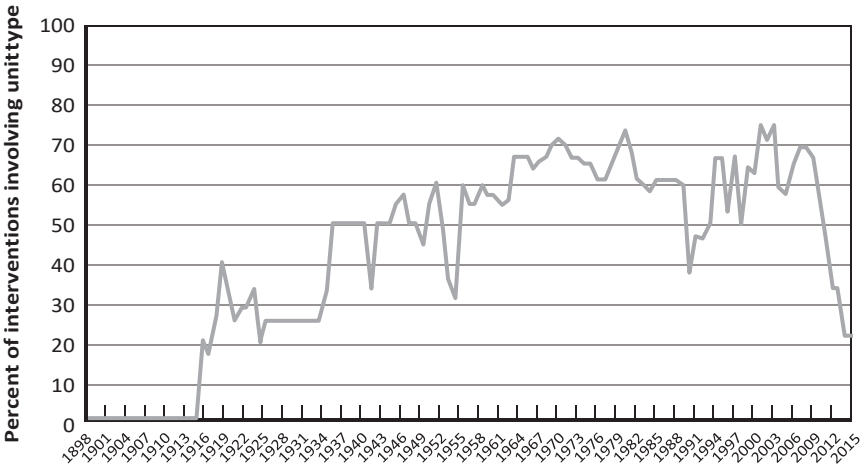
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-C.7*

Figure C.8
Use of Engineer Units
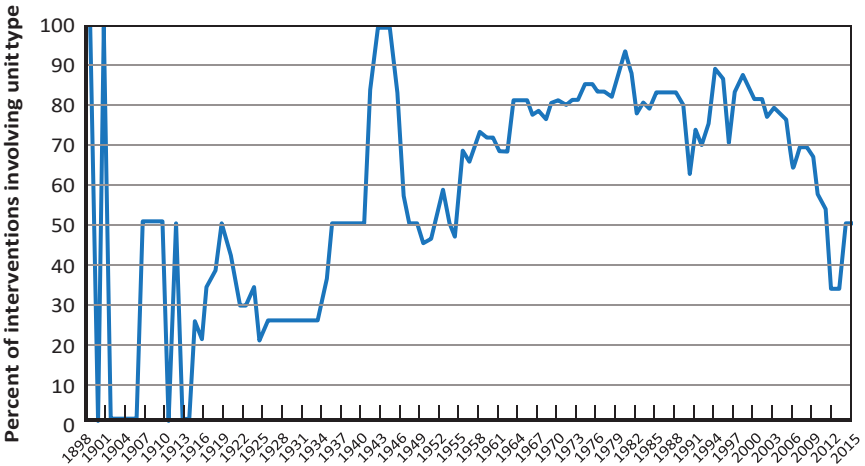
SOURCE: RAND analysis.

RAND *RR1831A-C.8*

given year. This has changed, more recently, and in ongoing interventions since about 2009, engineer unit involvement has fallen closer to 50 percent. This may reflect a shift in the types of operations the Army has more recently been conducting. Engineer units may be less vital for certain types of interventions and may also be less commonly deployed in small interventions such as those initiated in recent years.

One notable and consistent trend that we have remarked on several times in this discussion is the recent drop in the percent involvement of many different types of units, including combat arms, combat support, and engineer units. It is likely that these trends reflect both a shift in the type of operations the United States has conducted since the late 2000s as well as a shift from large, widespread military campaigns to smaller interventions in places such as Africa and the Baltics. Both changes may affect the types and numbers of units deployed to a given intervention.

Statistical Appendix

In this appendix we present the regression tables and some of the more technical details from the regressions included in Chapters Three and Four.

Statistical Models of the Likelihood and Size of Different Types of U.S. Military Interventions

This section presents the results of the statistical models of the likelihood and size of U.S. military interventions summarized in Chapter Three. We present these models in the order in which they were discussed above: interventions into armed conflicts, stability operation interventions, and deterrent interventions. As discussed above, each table includes several sets of models reflecting different methods of controlling for the temporal dependence of the observations.

Interventions into Armed Conflicts

Table D.1 presents the statistical models assessing the likelihood of a U.S. intervention into an armed conflict. In each of these logit models, the dependent variable is a binary measure of whether the United States intervened or not.

Table D.2 presents the second stage of a two-stage Heckman selection model assessing the size of a U.S. intervention into an armed conflict. The first stage of these models is the Non-Intervention Year model shown in Table D.1.

Table D.1
Statistical Models of the Likelihood of U.S. Intervention into Armed Conflicts

Variables	Prior Intervention	Prior-Year DV Lag	Initiation Only	Non-Intervention Years
Degree of U.S. Global Hegemony, 1-Year Lag	7.551*** (2.420)			
Number of Ongoing Wars in the World	0.0618** (0.0245)			
Oil Production, Natural Log	−0.0700*** (0.0217)			−0.0593** (0.0243)
Number of U.S. Ground Interventions, 1-Year Lag	−0.0644** (0.0277)	−0.198*** (0.0581)		
U.S. Defensive Alliance, 1-Year Lag	1.406*** (0.257)		1.472*** (0.437)	1.711*** (0.322)
U.S. Military Assistance, 1-Year Lag, Natural Log	0.114*** (0.0159)	0.101*** (0.0303)		0.0576*** (0.0161)
U.S. Negative War Experience in Prior 20 Years	−1.174*** (0.288)		−1.279*** (0.418)	
U.S. Intervention in Country in a Previous Year	2.832*** (0.256)			
Intervention, 1-Year Lag		6.354*** (0.517)		
Number of Battle Deaths in Ongoing Wars in the World, Natural Log			0.335*** (0.105)	−0.554*** (0.159)
Category of Prior U.S. Combat Deaths, Lagged Years 3–8			−0.495*** (0.144)	
Number of Battle Deaths in Prior Years of War, Natural Log				0.644*** (0.0862)
Non-Intervention Years				−3.140*** (0.443)
Non-Intervention Years Squared				0.463*** (0.0952)
Non-Intervention Years Cubed				−0.0186*** (0.00531)
Constant	−5.248*** (1.021)	−1.649** (0.837)	−5.941*** (1.299)	−0.575 (1.672)
Observations	1,074	768	1,143	827

Table D.1—Continued

Variables	Prior Intervention	Prior-Year DV Lag	Initiation Only	Non-Intervention Years
Log Likelihood	−283.1	−83.62	−181.5	−198.8
Chi Squared	439.3	576.9	35.30	423.4
Pseudo R-squared	0.437	0.775	0.0886	0.516

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 (Standard Errors in parentheses)

Table D.2
Statistical Models of the Size of U.S. Interventions into Armed Conflicts

Variables	Base	Prior-Year DV Lag
Number of Battle Deaths in Prior Years of War, Natural Log	0.388*** (0.101)	0.294*** (0.0952)
U.S. Defensive Alliance, 1-Year Lag	−2.728*** (0.434)	−1.577*** (0.435)
Degree of U.S. Global Hegemony, 1-Year Lag	−15.51*** (4.118)	
Number of Ongoing Wars in the World	−0.158*** (0.0386)	
U.S. Military Assistance, 1-Year Lag, Natural Log	2.222*** (0.565)	
Category of Prior U.S. Combat Deaths, Lagged Years 3–8	−0.321* (0.166)	
U.S. Negative War Experience in Prior 20 Years	−1.841*** (0.439)	
U.S. Military Expenditures, Natural Log, 1-Year Lag		0.540*** (0.138)
Number of U.S. Troops in Intervention, 1-Year Lag		0.543*** (0.0534)
Constant	−4.803 (3.914)	−8.913*** (3.102)
Observations	827	791
Censored Observations	664	664
Wald Chi²	215.3	365.2

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 (Standard Errors in parentheses)

Stability Operation Interventions

Table D.3 presents the statistical models assessing the likelihood of a U.S. stability operation intervention. In each of these logit models, the dependent variable is a binary measure of whether the United States conducted a stability operation or not.

Table D.3
Statistical Models of the Likelihood of U.S. Stability Operation Interventions

Variables	Prior Year Lag	Non-Intervention Years	Initiation Only	Final
Number of Refugees Generated, Inverse Hyperbolic Sine	0.187*** (0.0612)	0.274*** (0.0351)	0.109* (0.0565)	0.253*** (0.0373)
U.S. Involvement in Combat Phase, Previous Five Years		2.075*** (0.408)		2.732*** (0.470)
Number of Ongoing U.S. Interventions, 1-Year Lag	−0.112** (0.0541)			
Europe Dummy Variable			1.778** (0.813)	1.671*** (0.359)
Minimum Distance to U.S., Inverse Hyperbolic Sine			−0.302** (0.147)	
Number of U.S. Troops Involved in Combat Phase, Inverse Hyperbolic Sine			0.322*** (0.0509)	
U.S. Military Assistance, 1-Year Lag, Inverse Hyperbolic Sine				0.0968*** (0.0199)
Intervention, 1-Year Lag	7.091*** (0.451)			
Non-Intervention Years		−1.250*** (0.140)		−1.102*** (0.137)
Non-Intervention Years Squared		0.0625*** (0.00951)		0.0552*** (0.00916)
Non-Intervention Years Cubed		−0.000846*** (0.000170)		−0.000745*** (0.000159)
Constant	−5.388*** (1.135)	−3.598*** (0.400)	−4.138*** (1.347)	−5.079*** (0.541)

Table D.3—Continued

Variables	Prior Year Lag	Non-Intervention Years	Initiation Only	Final
Observations	3,090	3,215	3,001	3,207
Log Likelihood	−111.1	−207.2	−77.51	−181.9
Chi Squared	640.1	510.7	33.86	560.7
Pseudo R-squared	0.742	0.552	0.179	0.606

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 (Standard Errors in parentheses)

Table D.4 presents the second stage of a two-stage Heckman selection model assessing the size of a U.S. stability operation intervention. The first stage of these models is the Final model shown in Table D.3.

Table D.4
Statistical Models of the Size of U.S. Stability Operation Interventions

Variables	Base	Half Decade Dummies
Number of U.S. Troops Involved in Combat Phase, Inverse Hyperbolic Sine	0.229*** 0.0224	0.228*** 0.0263
GDP per Capita, 1-Year Lag, Inverse Hyperbolic Sine	−0.473** 0.188	−1.062*** 0.164
U.S. Defensive Alliance	−1.862*** 0.324	−0.899*** 0.284
Minimum Distance to U.S., Inverse Hyperbolic Sine	−1.172*** 0.255	
U.S. Economic Assistance, 1-Year Lag, Inverse Hyperbolic Sine	0.105*** 0.0290	
U.S. Military Personnel, 1-Year Lag, Inverse Hyperbolic Sine	3.634*** 0.833	
Number of Refugees Generated, Inverse Hyperbolic Sine	0.148*** 0.0472	
Half-Decade Dummy: 1946–1950		— —

Table D.4—Continued

Variables	Base	Half Decade Dummies
Half-Decade Dummy: 1951–1955		— —
Half-Decade Dummy: 1956–1960		— —
Half-Decade Dummy: 1961–1965		4.307*** 1.333
Half-Decade Dummy: 1966–1970		0.538 1.322
Half-Decade Dummy: 1971–1975		— —
Half-Decade Dummy: 1976–1980		— —
Half-Decade Dummy: 1981–1985		1.361 0.955
Half-Decade Dummy: 1986–1990		3.202*** 1.051
Half-Decade Dummy: 1991–1995		1.369* 0.810
Half-Decade Dummy: 1996–2000		1.480* 0.820
Half-Decade Dummy: 2001–2005		0.445 0.779
Half-Decade Dummy: 2006–2010		0.973 0.778
Constant	−10.11 8.171	15.93*** 1.724
Observations	3,200	3,200
Censored Observations	3,102	3,102
Wald Chi^2	321	281.7

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$ (Standard Errors in parentheses)

Deterrent Interventions

Table D.5 presents the statistical models assessing the likelihood of a U.S. deterrent intervention. In each of these logit models, the dependent variable is a binary measure of whether the United States conducted a deterrent intervention or not.

Table D.5
Statistical Models of the Likelihood of U.S. Deterrent Interventions

Variables	Prior Year Lag	Non-Intervention Years	Initiation Only
Degree of Threats Faced by Host State		0.320*** (0.0680)	
Host Nation GDP per capita, 1-Year Lag		−5.00e-05** (2.36e-05)	
Oil Production, Natural Log		0.0819*** (0.0205)	
Annual U.S. GDP Growth	0.163*** (0.0595)	0.263*** (0.0294)	0.251*** (0.0775)
U.S. Military Alliance, 1-Year Lag		2.868*** (0.264)	
Degree of U.S. Global Hegemony, 1-Year Lag	12.77*** (2.608)		14.50*** (2.792)
U.S. Military Assistance, 1-Year Lag, Natural Log	0.0604*** (0.0175)		0.0912*** (0.0230)
U.S. Deterrent Intervention, 1-Year Lag	9.492*** (0.341)		
Non-Intervention Years		−9.878*** (1.198)	
Non-Intervention Years Squared		4.047*** (0.747)	
Non-Intervention Years Cubed		−0.524*** (0.117)	
Constant	−9.333*** (0.639)	−1.729*** (0.305)	−10.30*** (0.741)

Table D.5—Continued

Variables	Prior Year Lag	Non-Intervention Years	Initiation Only
Observations	9,868	8,246	9,426
Log Likelihood	−262.5	−352.3	−176.2
Chi Squared	4,373	3,736	52.54
Pseudo R-squared	0.893	0.841	0.130

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 (Standard Errors in parentheses)

Table D.6 presents the second stage of a two-stage Heckman selection model assessing the size of a U.S. deterrent intervention. The first stage of these models is the Non-Intervention Years model shown in Table D.5.

Table D.6
Statistical Models of the Size of U.S. Deterrent Interventions

Variables	Base	Prior-Year DV Lag
Degree of U.S. Regional Hegemony, 1-Year Lag	1.701*** (0.538)	
U.S. Military Expenditures, Natural Log, 1-Year Lag	−0.555*** (0.109)	−0.195*** (0.0711)
Target of High Salience Territorial Claim	1.471*** (0.169)	0.640*** (0.109)
GDP per capita, 1-Year Lag, Inverse Hyperbolic Sine	0.730*** (0.141)	0.185*** (0.0627)
Oil Production, Natural Log	−0.0644*** (0.0151)	
Distance from U.S., Natural Log	−0.449* (0.261)	−0.308*** (0.106)
U.S. Military Alliance, 1-Year Lag	0.614*** (0.234)	0.830*** (0.135)
Nuclear Capable State, 1-Year Lag	0.972*** (0.195)	

Table D.6—Continued

Variables	Base	Prior-Year DV Lag
Annual U.S. GDP Growth		0.0800*** (0.0183)
U.S. Military Personnel, 1-Year Lag, Natural Log		0.352* (0.208)
Number of U.S. Troops in Intervention, 1-Year Lag		0.658*** (0.0181)
Constant	14.34*** (3.112)	3.311 (2.671)
Observations	8,246	8,241
Censored Observations	7,618	7,618
Wald Chi^2	303.3	2,228

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 (Standard Errors in parentheses)

Clustering Analysis

Data and Methodology

To identify the likelihood and effect of clustering on intervention frequency we conducted a statistical analysis using RUGID. We used logit models in which each observation is a country year.[1] In the analysis, we include all country years in the international system in the period 1900 to 2014. The dependent variable is a dichotomous variable, taking the value of "1" when there is a least one intervention in a given year. There are three key independent variables of interest for the clustering analysis. First, the "previous intervention" variable that takes a value of "1" if the United States has previously intervened a given country within the past ten years. Second, the "nearby intervention" variable that takes a value of "1" if there is at least one ongoing intervention within 1,000 km of the country within the past five years. Third, the

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[1] Logit models are designed specifically to deal with cases where the dependent variable is dichotomous, taking the values of 0 and 1. For more on logit regressions, see Greene, 2011.

"maximum troops" variable measures the size of the largest recent, nearby intervention (within five years and 1,000 km). If clustering does exist, then we would expect to find a relationship between the likelihood of an intervention in any given year and the existence of a previous intervention in the same country in the past ten years and/or the existence of recent, nearby interventions. If the size of nearby interventions affects the likelihood of clustering then we should find a relationship between the likelihood of an intervention and the size of recent, nearby interventions.

In addition to these key variables, we also explored a number of control variables hypothesized to be associated with the likelihood of a U.S. intervention. These include *wealth of the target state* measured as GDP per capita; *regime type of the target state* measured by the polity score from the Polity IV dataset; *relationship between the United States and the target state* as measured by whether the United States has a defensive alliance with the target state.[2] Also included was a control variable for the Cold War, which takes a value of "1" in the years from 1946 to 1989.[3] We tested a number of characteristics of the United States that might be relevant to the likelihood of interventions (such as *U.S. GDP growth*, *presidential administration*, *years to next presidential administration*, *overall U.S. troops deployed*, and *total ongoing U.S. interventions*).[4] In general, these control variables did not significantly affect the substantive results and significantly reduce the number of observations included in the regression. Only the alliance variable was consistently statistically significant, increasing the likelihood of a U.S. intervention as expected. Therefore, the final models excluded these control variables to focus on the substantive clustering effect.

Results

Chapter Four presented the key results from our analysis. To summarize, we found that there is significant evidence that interventions are likely to form geographic and temporal clustering. First, interventions

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[2]   Klare, 1981; Pearson and Baumann, 1977; Yoon, 1997.

[3]   Brands, 1988; James and O'Neal, 1991.

[4]   See, for example, Fearon, 1994; Meernik, 1994; Ostrom Jr. and Job, 1986; Meernik, 1996.

are significantly more likely in a specific target country when there has been a previous intervention in the same country in past 10 years (12 percent likelihood versus 0.1 percent in countries where there have not been previous U.S. interventions in the past 10 years). Second, interventions are also more likely in countries where there has been a recent or ongoing U.S. interventions within 1000 km. This effect is largest when the recent nearby interventions are on the smaller side (e.g., 2000 troops rather than 10,000 or 20,000). When clusters of interventions do occur, the follow-on interventions (those that occur after a previous U.S. intervention in a specific country or recent U.S. country in a nearby country) tend to be large, with more than 20,000 troops. In Chapter Four, we presented graphs to illustrate these effects. In Table D.7 we provide the complete regression results for the main models.

Table D.7
Regression Results from Clustering Models

	All Interventions	Interventions with >20K Troops	Interventions with <20K Troops
Previous Intervention, Last 10 Years	3.588 (11.85)**	3.868 (7.72)**	3.870 (3.36)**
Nearby Intervention, Last 5 years	1.160 (3.73)**	1.539 (2.34)*	1.026 (1.05)
Largest Proximate Intervention, (1-Year Lag, Natural Log)	−0.086 (2.88)**	−0.088 (1.48)	−0.067 (0.67)
Constant	−5.592 (25.84)**	−7.501 (14.99)**	−8.195 (11.75)**
N	15,378	15,378	15,378

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$ (Standard Errors in parentheses)

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In recent years, the frequency of U.S. military interventions in overseas areas, including not only those involving conventional war but also peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations, has risen. These interventions have involved thousands of troops, cost billions of dollars, and placed significant demands on Army leadership, planning, and resources. The Army would benefit from an enhanced ability to anticipate the types and conditions of overseas military interventions it is most likely to be called upon to undertake in the future. This report constructs three different sets of models using historical data (one for each of three intervention types: interventions into armed conflict, stability operations in conflict and postconflict environments, and deterrent interventions). It examines the key factors influencing the incidence of military interventions and intervention size. Finally, the analysis provides the Army with signposts and metrics that can be used to identify countries, conflicts, and crises that are at highest risk for a U.S. intervention. Key signposts include the relationship between the target of the intervention and the United States, past U.S. military involvement in that country, and the severity of the crisis or threat to which the United States is responding. These signposts would allow the Army to better anticipate and plan for future interventions and could improve both near- and medium-term force-planning decisions.

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